

The Second Jewish Revolt

The Bar Kokhba War, 132-136 CE



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The Second Jewish Revolt

The Bar Kokhba War, 132–136 CE

By

Menahem Mor



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Cover illustration: A Sela dated to the second year of the Revolt with the inscription "Jerusalem".
From Hoard A found in the the Teomim Cave in Western Jerusalemite Mountains.
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This book is printed on acid-free paper and produced in a sustainable manner.

Dedicated
to my beloved grandchildren:
Yarden, Maya, Tali,
Shachar, Shai, Savit,
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Introduction

During the course of my research on Bar Kokhba, I was surprised to find the following saying: “Only speculations are possible, but once having made them we may be on the lookout for the evidence to prove them.”¹ This saying reminded me of what Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol, one of the great Russian writers of the nineteenth century, wrote 160 years ago in his epic prose poem (*poema*), *Dead Souls*. His cynical attempt to interpret the character of his hero Chichikov is reflected in the following words:

That both ladies were in the end fully convinced of what they had at first assumed as a mere supposition is nothing out of the way. We learned people, as we call ourselves, behave in almost the same way, and our learned theories are a proof of it. At first our savants approach them in almost a cringing spirit, they begin timidly, discreetly, they begin with the humblest suggestion: Is not this the origin? Does not such a country derive from such and such a spot? or, “Is not this document connected with another of a later period?” or “Should we not take such and such a people to mean this or that other people?” He immediately quotes such and such ancient writer, and if he can only detect a hint or what he takes for a hint, he grows audacious and confident, talks to the writers of antiquity without ceremony, asks them questions and himself supplies the answers, quite forgetting that he had begun with a timid hypothesis; he soon fancies that he sees it, that it is clear, and his argument is concluded with the words, “This is how it was: so this is the people that is meant by this name! This is how we must look at the subject!” Then it is proclaimed to all from the platform—and the newly discovered truth is sent on its travels around the world, gathering to itself followers and disciples.”²

In view of this cynical description by Gogol, one wonders whether this is the method used by a modern historian? Should a historian first determine the presuppositions that will turn into factual certainties and only afterwards, search for evidence and proofs to support the speculations that had turned into concrete fact? Indeed, throughout my research on the Bar Kokhba revolt, I encountered this approach many times!! This method appears extremely

1 Hannah M. Cotton, “The Bar Kokhba Revolt and the Documents,” 151.

2 Nikolai Gogol, *The Dead Souls*, translated from the Russian by Bernard Guilbert Guerny (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1966), 263–264.

pronounced against the background of the scarcity of sources at our disposal. The fewer the available sources, the more the speculations; and sources and speculation together create historical facts that will enable many scholars to reconstruct the revolt in all its stages.

It is not surprising that the enigmatic character of Bar Kokhba and the lack of sufficient sources to understand him have fired the imagination of writers and led to a rich flowering of literary works on this subject in Israel and around the world. The most popular suspense writer in Israel, Ram Oren, wrote a novel about historical figures of the Second Revolt.³ A best-selling writer in Israel Yochi Brandes gave us a complete portrayal of the life of Rabbi Akiba in her book.⁴ And in Miami, Florida (in the United States), Ellen Brazer composed a historical novel on the military successes of Bar Kokhba.⁵

Since I do not write romantic fiction, I have tried throughout my book to base my writing mainly on sources and verified testimonies, and aided by them, I have made an attempt to understand the Second Revolt against the Romans during the years 132–136. The Bar Kokhba Revolt (132–136 CE), unlike the Great Revolt (66–70 CE), did not have a historian such as Joseph ben Matthias, who devoted a comprehensive book to the event. The longest literary description of the Second Revolt is that of the Roman historian Cassius Dio who lived at the end of the second century and the beginning of the third century CE. In his *Roman History*, “Book 69,” he devoted 16 lines to a description of this revolt. The rest of the literary evidence is scattered among a variety of Jewish sources that were written after the revolt and dealt mainly with its failure. There are also Christian and pagan sources that retrospectively mention the revolt in brief, while expressing their prejudiced opinions about Judaism.

In view of this, a historian who tries to reconstruct the events of the Second Revolt must have recourse to various archaeological findings and sources such as papyri and epigraphic and numismatic evidence, in addition to archaeological surveys in various parts of the Land of Israel and its surroundings. Regarding archaeological evidence, the historian is subject to the “mercies” of the archaeologists and especially the publication of those archaeologists’ finds in order to integrate them within research and in historical reconstruction.

3 Ram Oren, *The Red Scarf: The Bar Kokhba Revolt War and Vengeance* (Tel Aviv: Keshet Publication, 2013).

4 Yochi Brandes, *Akiva's Orchard* (Tel Aviv: Kinneret Zmora-Bitan Dvir Publishing House, 2012).

5 Ellen Brazer, *And So It Was Written* (TCJ Publishing, 2012).

Evidence and Sources Available before Publication of the Hebrew Edition in 1991⁶

During the 1950s and 1960s, archaeological excavations and surveys were held in the Judean Desert. An expedition of the French École Biblique located in East Jerusalem surveyed Wadi Murabba'at, and the results that were published by the French team were edited by the monks Pierre Benoit, Joseph Milik, and Roland De Vaux.⁷

In their publication of 1961 titled *Texts in Hebrew and Aramaic*, Milik published more than fifty papyri, among which was mentioned—for the first time not from rabbinical sources—the name and title of the leader of the revolt: Shimon Bar Koziba, Prince of Israel.⁸ Other papyri listed the dates of the revolt and the names of the places in which the leader of the revolt had been active.⁹

During the years 1960 and 1961, the Hebrew University conducted extensive archaeological excavations, headed by Professor Yigael Yadin and others, in the caves of the Judean Desert, in Naḥal Ḥever, and in the Cave of Letters. In these excavations and surveys, archaeologists discovered many remains associated with the days of the Second Revolt, including a variety of documents and letters from that period. However, Yigael Yadin did not publish full scientific excavation reports, nor did he publish the documents and letters that were found in his excavations. He limited himself to brief early publications,¹⁰ mainly consisting of popular “albums.”¹¹ After his death in 1989, a collection of the documents written in Greek and edited by Naphtali Lewis was published. So were

6 Menahem Mor, *The Bar-Kokhba Revolt: Its Extent and Effect* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, The Israel Exploration Society, 1991) [in Hebrew].

7 Pierre Benoit, Józef Tadeusz Milik, Roland De Vaux, *Les Grottes de Murabb'aât*. Discoveries in the Judean Desert 11. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961).

8 Józef Tadeusz Milik, Papyrus No. 24.

9 For the dates of the revolt, see Papyri Nos. 22–25, 29–30. The place names were, for example, Herodis = Herodium—No. 24, Ein Gedi—No. 46.

10 Yigael Yadin, “Expedition D,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 11 (1961): 36–52; Yigael Yadin, *The Finds from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of the Letters (Judean Desert Series)* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1963).

11 *Searching for Bar Kokhba: History of the Discoveries in the Caves of the Judean Desert and the Letters of the Leader of the Revolt against Rome* (Jerusalem: Maariv Library, 1971) [in Hebrew]. Another edition was published in 1977. The book was translated into English in two editions. One edition was published in New York under the title *Bar-Kokhba: The Rediscovery of the Legendary Hero of the Last Jewish Revolt against Imperial Rome* (New York: Random House, 1971). The second edition was published in London by Weidenfeld and Nicolson, in 1971.

the documents in Aramaic and Nabataean edited by Yigael Yadin and Jonas Greenfield.¹² In addition, initial texts were sporadically published in various places on some of the letters to which Yadin had referred in his publications, for example, the research of Baruch Lifshitz,¹³ which illuminated a variety of subjects associated with the revolt.

The coins of the Second Revolt were described in various publications from time to time, but most of the coins reached collectors through the merchants of antiquities who had bought them from robbers of antiquities. In this situation, their contribution to research on the revolt was fairly limited because their provenance was unknown. Also, the coins with the inscription *Shimon* were quite often erroneously attributed to the leader of the revolt, although they were the coins of Shimon the Hasmonaean.

In 1984, the collector and coin researcher Leo Mildenberg published an anthology that summed up the coin findings of the Second Revolt. In spite of the importance of this corpus, Mildenberg based the content on private collections that reveal little and conceal much.

In the 1980s, research was begun on the system of hideouts, which some of the researchers, mainly Amos Kloner and Yigal Tepper, associated with the preparations of the rebels for the Second Revolt.¹⁴ In order to exemplify to what extent archaeological evidence was lacking, let me note that even in Bethar, the last stronghold of the rebel fighters, no systematic archaeological excavations were carried out, and the site was to some extent neglected.¹⁵

My book, *The Bar Kokhba Revolt: Its Extent and Effect*, was published in Jerusalem by Yad Yitzhak Ben-Zvi in 1991. While writing the book, I was forced to rely on the given situation of partial and problematic knowledge and the lack of sources (as I mentioned above). As a result, I had to deal in many instances with assumptions and suppositions that were in line with the information I had in hand until 1990. In spite of this limitation, the book represented thorough and comprehensive research on the Second Revolt at the time of its

12 *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of the Letters*. The Greek edited by Naphtali Lewis, and the Aramaic and Nabatean eds. Yigael Yadin, Jonas C. Greenfield (Jerusalem, Israel Exploration Society: Hebrew University of Jerusalem Shrine of the Books, 1989).

13 Baruch Lifshitz, "Greek Documents from the Cave of Horror," *Israel Exploration Journal* 12 (1962): 201–207; Lifshitz, "Papyrus grecs du désert de Juda," *Aegyptus* 42 (1962): 240–258.

14 Amos Kloner, Yigal Tepper, eds. *Hiding Complexes in the Judean Shephelah* (Tel-Aviv: ha-Hevrah la-Hakirat Erets-Yisra'el ya-'ati'koteha, 1987) [in Hebrew].

15 See the bibliographical list, Section 7, Items 9–11, which include reports of the partial excavations of David Ussishkin.

publication. The book, which was written in Hebrew, comprised the subjects of the Second Revolt and included the following chapters:

1. *The Reasons for the Outbreak of the Bar Kokhba Revolt*

This chapter dealt with the possible ongoing reasons and immediate motivations that led the Jews to venture out on another revolt against the Romans in 132 CE. The ongoing reasons focused on the situation of the Jews in the Land of Israel during the years 70–132 CE, with a discussion of the following specifics: the influence of the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem on the Jews of the country, the socioeconomic changes that occurred in Judaea during those years, and the part played by the Roman army in the events of that period. With regard to the immediate reasons, I focused on national and religious motivations, such as the decrees against circumcision and the transformation of Jerusalem into a Roman *colony* named *Aelia Capitolina*.

2. *The Territorial Expansion of the Revolt*

This included a comprehensive discussion about the various regions and areas in the Land of Israel during the Second Revolt. A review was made of the different populations, their attitudes toward the revolt, and their participation in and contribution to the events during the revolt. This was accompanied by a detailed review of the non-Jewish population in the country, their attitudes, and the part that played in the revolt. My conclusion in this chapter was that the revolt was a local one that was concentrated within a limited area that included Hebron and the Judean Mountains.

3. *The Roman Army Manpower in Judaea during the Revolt*

This was a review of the available material about the manpower of the Roman army during the revolt, which legions and auxiliary units participated in suppressing the revolt, who were the generals that fought in Judaea, and how large were the fatalities on the Jewish and Roman sides.

4. *The Leadership of the Revolt*

This chapter dealt with the revolt and the figure of its leader. The questions discussed were about cooperation between him and Rabbi Akiba, the greatest of the sages of that period, and whether could we consider any opposition to the revolt and its leaders.

5. *The Outcome of the Revolt*

This concluding chapter of the book dealt with the outcome of the events of the revolt and its socioeconomic implications for the Jewish and non-Jewish

population of the country. How did the results of the revolt influence the political sphere? That is to say, how did the system of Roman-Jewish relations develop after the suppression of the revolt? And of course, how did the failure of the revolt influence the course of Judaism in following generations?

Evidence and Sources Available Since 1991

After the appearance of the Hebrew book, an increased amount of research interest was given to the Bar Kokhba revolt. There is no doubt that the main reason for this interest was the publication of the documents from the Judaean Desert.¹⁶ Most importantly the publication of documents in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek that were found in Nahal Hever¹⁷ and the documents in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Nabataean from the Cave of Letters.¹⁸

The publication of these documents allowed for a renewed discussion of the various issues associated with the Second Revolt. Besides their contribution to the linguistic research on the period, the study of economic issues, and halachic questions, some of the documents shed initial and original light on various aspects of the figure of the leader of the revolt, his personality, and his relations with his commanders. The contents of the documents, the names of settlements mentioned in them, and especially the area of their location, allowed for a discussion on the central and important question regarding the extent of the Second Revolt. The documents contributed, among other things, to detailed information about a number of families, the most prominent among them being the family of Babata, whose activities can be learnt from these documents.¹⁹

Another contribution during these years to the research on the Second Revolt was knowledge of the hideout complexes that was broadened and sup-

16 See, for example, the first publication of Ada Yardeni, *Documents of Nahal Şe'elim* (Beersheba: University of Ben-Gurion in the Negev Press, 1995) [in Hebrew].

17 Hannah Cotton and Ada Yardeni, eds. *Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek Document Texts from Nahal Hever and Other Sites* (the Seiyal Collection II), (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

18 Ada Yardeni, *Collection of Aramaic, Hebrew and Nabataean Documents from the Judaean Desert and Related Material* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, Ben-Zion Dinur Center for the Research of Jewish History, 2000) [in Hebrew]. Yigael Yadin, et al., eds. *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters, Hebrew Aramaic and Nabatean-Aramaic Papyri* (with an additional contribution by Hannah M. Cotton, et al.). (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society: Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University: Shrine of the Book, 2002).

19 See the bibliographical list, Section 7.

plemented by research on the *systems of refuge*. A summary of the findings on these systems appeared in two books that also shed light on the territorial expanse of the revolt.²⁰

Yinon Shvitziel attempted to extend the phenomenon of the refuge caves to the area of the Galilee and gave them a Galilean term: *Rock Shelters*. From findings that included an examination of sixty-five complexes at thirty-five sites, he tried to expand the spread of the Second Revolt to the area of the Galilee as well.²¹ In the numismatic field, the surveys and excavations in the above-mentioned complexes made a special contribution. These coins of the Second Revolt, which were for the first time found *in situ* (contrary to the coin hoards that were found in the past), indicated a precise place in which the coins were used. The findings made it possible to sketch the map of the revolt.

As I noted above, the information about the Roman army was deficient and forced researchers of the revolt to rely on partial knowledge derived from inscriptions in which chance references were made to units that may have served in Provincia Judaea. Regarding this matter, research was not especially enriched. But as a result of the studies by Werner Eck, research was diverted in new directions, to the information that came from discharge documents (*diplomata*) of Roman veterans, in which the course of service of the discharged soldier was mentioned.

Between the years 1994 and 2006, three collections of *diplomata* were published that enriched research on the Second Revolt.²² Eck, who also published additional *diplomata* in the journal *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, thought that they indicated the intensity of the revolt. In his opinion, one could learn from them the territorial expanse of the revolt to the Roman provinces of Arabia and Syria. And to the northern parts of the land, to the area of the Galilee.²³

20 David Amit and Hanan Eshel, eds., *Refuge Caves of the Bar Kokhba Revolt Period* (Tel-Aviv, Israel Exploration Society, 1998) [in Hebrew]. Hanan Eshel and Roi Porat, *Refuge Caves of the Bar Kokhba Revolt Period: Second Collection* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2009) [in Hebrew].

21 Yinon Shvitziel, *Rock Shelters and Hiding Complexes in the Galilee: The History of the Jewish Settlement in the Galilee during the Early Roman Period, Based on a Study of Rock-Cut Caves*. Ph.D. diss, Bar-Ilan University (Ramat-Gan: 2009, in Hebrew).

22 The editors and publishers of the collections in 1994, 2003, and 2006 are Margaret Roxan and Paul Holder.

23 A summary of the many articles by Eck appear in his book: Werner Eck, *Rom herausfordern: Bar Kochba im Kampf gegen das Imperium Romanum. Das Bild des Bar Kochba-Aufstandes im Spiegel der neuen epigraphischen Überlieferung* (Roma: Unione internazionale degli istituti di archeologia, storia e storia dell'arte, 2007). For a collection of Eck's articles,

With regard to the participation of the Galilee in the Second Revolt, Eck published a number of articles in which he based his claim on a Latin inscription from Tel Shalem. Although it had already been published before 1991, the inscription was given renewed attention and interpretation as a result of Eck's research. This issue has been dealt with in detail by me in the English edition.

The degree to which the present situation regarding sources is still problematic is exemplified by the fact, for example, that even the chronology of the revolt is still being questioned. The beginning of the revolt and the erection of Aelia Capitolina at the initiative of Hadrian has recently been discussed in three articles that were written more or less at the same time. The researchers based their discussions on the testimony of the Church Father Epiphanius and reached various conclusions regarding the beginning of the revolt. Livia Capponi and Yehosuah Peleg²⁴ brought the events forward to the year 117 CE, when Hadrian was crowned emperor; while Renan Baker²⁵ rejected that early date and related the evidence of Epiphanius to the year 130 CE. A similar difficulty arises in relation to the end of the revolt. In rabbinical sources, the ninth of Av, August 135 CE, is the date for the fall of Bethar and the end of the revolt. But Eck, in view of the Latin inscription, recently questioned this date and postponed the end of the revolt by another few months to the year 136 CE. Even the name of the leader of the revolt, Shimon Bar Koziba, which was considered after the publication of his letters to be "a resolved question," has lately been questioned again in studies by Boaz Zissu.

The extensive interest in the Second Revolt and in the subjects that are indirectly associated with it can be seen in the quantity of publications that have appeared since the year the Hebrew version of my book was published. The amount of research on the Second Revolt and its publication in this period is extremely rich (see the attached bibliography).

A number of master's and PhD theses written in Israel and abroad have strengthened my views. Raz Mustigman focused on the historical significance

see *Judäa—Syria Palästina: die Auseinandersetzung einer Provinz mit römischer Politik und Kult* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014).

- 24 Leoni Capponi, "Hadrian in Jerusalem and Alexandria in 117," *Athenaeum* 98 (2010): 489–501; Yehoshua Peleg, "A Proposal for the Dating of the Event 'Freedom of Israel' in the Documents from the Judaean Scrolls," *News in the Research of Jerusalem* 17 (2011): 369–383 [in Hebrew].
- 25 Renan Baker, "Epiphanius, on Weights and Measures §14: Hadrian's Journey to the East and the Rebuilding of Jerusalem," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 182 (2012): 157–167.

of the Talmudic traditions concerning the fall of Bethar.²⁶ Boaz Zisu dealt with a settlement in Judaea and with the results of the revolt on settlements.²⁷ Roi Porat wrote his thesis on the refuge caves of the revolt period.²⁸ Nahum Sagiv researched Jewish Perea and devoted part of his thesis to the question of whether Perea had participated in the Second Revolt.²⁹ The master's thesis of Doron Sar-Avi concerned the place names that appeared in the documents of the Judean Desert,³⁰ while the master's thesis of Victoria Efremov discussed the symbols on the coins of the revolt.³¹ Matthew Novenson, in his doctoral thesis at the Princeton Theological Seminary, devoted a lengthy chapter to the question of the messianic nature of Bar Kokhba, the leader of the revolt.³² And at the University of Oxford, Junghwa Choi wrote his thesis on Jewish leadership

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- 26 Raz Mustigman, *From the Mount of Olives to Immer: The Historical Significance of a Collection of Traditions on Destruction from the Sugya "and Bethar was captured" in the Palestinian Talmud*. Ph.D. Diss. (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 2006. in Hebrew). See also his master's thesis, *Chapters in the Research on the Bar Kokhba Revolt in View of the Sugya "And Bethar was Captured" in the Jerusalem Talmud*. M.A. Thesis, Tel Aviv University, Department of Jewish History (Tel Aviv: 1995. in Hebrew).
- 27 Boaz Zissu, *Rural Settlement in the Judean Hills and Foothills from the Late Second Temple Period to the Bar Kokhba Revolt*. Ph.D. Diss. (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 2001. in Hebrew).
- 28 Roi Porat, *Refuge Caves from the Period of the Bar Kokhba Revolt in the Ein Gedi—Qumran Area in View of the Renewed Research of the Judean Desert*. M.A. Thesis, (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 2006) [in Hebrew].
- 29 Nahum Sagiv, *The Jewish Settlement in Perea (Transjordan) During the Hellenistic and Roman Periods: Historical Data and Archaeological Findings*. Diss., Bar Ilan University (Ramat Gan: Martin Szusz Department of Land of Israel Studies, 2004) [in Hebrew].
- 30 Doron Sar-Avi, *Place Names in the Documents of the Roman Period Found in the Judean Desert*. M.A. Thesis, Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University, 2002 [in Hebrew]. Sar-Avi, *Life in Judaea from the Late Second Temple Period to the Bar Kokhba Revolt in Light of the Documents Discovered in the Judean Desert*. Ph.D. diss., Bar Ilan University 2008 [in Hebrew].
- 31 Victoria Efremov, *Motifs and Symbols (Associated with the Temple in Jerusalem) on the Coins of the Jewish Wars Against the Romans and the Bar Kokhba War*. M.A. Thesis, (Haifa: University of Haifa, 2000) [in Hebrew].
- 32 The subject of Matthew V. Novenson's Ph.D. thesis was *Christ among the Messiahs: Christ Language in Paul and Messiah Language in Ancient Judaism*. The dissertation was published with the same title by Oxford University Press, in 2012. See also his article on Bar Kokhba's messianism: Matthew V. Novenson, "Why Does R. Akiba Acclaim Bar Kokhba as a Messiah?," *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period* 40 (2009): 551–572.

in Roman Palestine between 70 and 135 CE, in which significant parts of the Second Revolt were dealt with.³³

In the years that have passed since the publication of my book in Hebrew, two attempts were made at conferences to sum up the research situation on the subject of the Second Revolt. The first conference was held at Bar Ilan University in 2000,³⁴ and the second one a year later at the University of Princeton. At these conferences, the participants coped with the situation of the sources and the new information that I presented above. New questions, different research approaches, and various theories and assumptions were presented that were based on the new information at our disposal today.

My book in English is titled: *The Second Jewish Revolt: The Bar Kokhba War, 132–136 CE*. It is in fact a continuation of the attempts that I have mentioned above to cope with the primary source material and information that has been amassed since the writing of the Hebrew version. Because the book deals with thirty-five years of research on the subject of the Bar Kokhba Revolt, its structure is partially based on the Hebrew edition. I retained the structure of the Hebrew book since its chapters comprise all the issues relating to the Second Revolt. But as I noted, all these chapters have been revised to update and renew discussion of the sources and information in the research literature that was available to me at the time I wrote the English version. The main innovation of the book is in dealing with the research that was published in the years since the appearance of the Hebrew edition. This research presents new questions and other insights, such as the question of the attitude of the Jews toward the destruction of the Temple. If, in the past, its destruction was interpreted as a watershed in Jewish history, the reappraisal of this interpretation by scholars raises questions regarding the position of the Temple in Jewish consciousness and whether its reconstruction had contributed to the reasons for the revolt.

The one issue about which I changed my initial assumptions is the question of the immediate causes for the revolt. In the Hebrew edition, I attributed the immediate cause to the national danger that apparently hovered over the Jews through the decree that banned circumcision and the conversion of Jerusalem into a Roman and pagan city. But a renewed study of the religious and political policy of Hadrian indicated different directions. Although the evidence shows

33 Choi Junghwa, *Jewish Leadership in Roman Palestine from 70 CE to 135 CE*, submitted for the degree of doctor of philosophy, Wolfson College (Oxford: 2006). The thesis was published as a book: Junghwa, *Jewish Leadership in Judaea after 70 CE*. (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

34 Hanan Eshel, Boaz Zisu, eds., *Innovations in the Research on the Bar Kokhba Revolt*. 21st Annual Conference of the Martin Szusz Department of Land of Israel Studies, March 13, 2001 (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University, 2001).

that the founding of Aelia Capitolina preceded the revolt, there is no proof that the change in the status of Jerusalem incited the Jews of Judaea to a Second Revolt against the Romans. Even the circumcision decree can no longer be interpreted as a danger to the existence of Judaism because it was not a general decree imposed on all the Jews of that period. On the other hand, the documents of the Judaean Desert in combination with rabbinical sources suggest the figure of the leader of the revolt appears to have been a charismatic one who highly resembled a political messiah acting within a limited geographical area, with limited support of his followers. In view of this, I attribute the main cause for the revolt to the personality and leadership of Bar Kokhba. One of the great pleasures of historians of ancient times is seeing some of the assumptions and probabilities they raised on the basis of partial sources verified in later years, after new findings and sources are discovered. I experienced this pleasure while writing the chapter on the territorial extent of the revolt. On the basis of partial knowledge based on limited sources and on random coin finds at my disposal, I claimed that the revolt was restricted in scope and that its territorial expanse was confined to the Judaean mountains and Hebron. And now, years later, new documents and rich coin finds that are better defined in regard to the parameters of the hideout and refuge systems confirm my suppositions regarding a limited revolt.

The book in its English edition summarizes 35 years of my research on the Bar Kokhba Revolt and makes it an updated and innovative work on the central issues associated with the Second Revolt. In addition, the book will serve the English reader by presenting, among other things, Israeli research and scholarship.

With the present situation concerning sources (previously described), possible innovations in the discussion by a historian can only be in the realm of interpretation. To move the factual discussion forward, a discovery—perhaps *A Diary of the Bar Kokhba War*—must be made that would increase the existing literary evidence!



JUDAEA DURING THE BAR KOKHBA REVOLT

MAP 1 *Map of Provincia Judaea.*

The Causes for the Outbreak of the Bar Kokhba Revolt

Introduction

During the entire period of Roman rule in Palestine, which began in 63 BCE, the Jews did not reconcile themselves to the conquest or to Roman domination. The practical outcome of this nonreconciliation was the frequent military struggles between rebellious Jews and the local and central authorities of the Roman regime that usually ended with the Romans gaining the upper hand.¹ Past experience should have taught the Jews of Palestine that their chances of victory in armed struggle against the Romans to liberate their country from Roman rule were slim. And indeed, it may be said retrospectively, that the failure of the Great Revolt and the concurrent destruction of the Temple must have been overwhelming proof that the problem of the Land of Israel as a Roman province could not be solved militarily.²

This stage in the system of relationships between the Jews and the Romans might have been the beginning of a new era in which a way could have been found to compromise with the Romans without it being interpreted as treason over Jewish interests, just as attempts of this kind were interpreted in the years before the Great Revolt and in the various stages of it.³ However, most of those in that period did not understand the course of events in this manner, and the

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- 1 See, for example, Titus' words to the Jews who defended Jerusalem: "Ever since Pompey reduced you by force you have never ceased from revolution, and have now ended by declaring open war upon the Romans?" (*JW*, VI, 329). For an extensive discussion on the events in the years 63 BC–70 CE, see Israel Ben Shalom, *The School of Shammai and the Zealots' Struggle against Rome* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 1993) [in Hebrew]; Aryeh Kasher, "Introduction: The Causative and Circumstantial Background to the Jewish Roman War," in *The Great Jewish Revolt: Factors and Circumstances Leading to its Outbreak*, ed. Aryeh Kasher (Jerusalem: Shazar Center, 1983), 9–90 [in Hebrew].
 - 2 For different aspects of the revolt, see Andrea M. Berlin, J. Andrew Overman, eds., *The First Jewish Revolt: Archaeology, History and Ideology* (London: Routledge, 2002).
 - 3 For the actions of the Sicarii against collaborators with the Roman government, see "And now the brigands once more incited the populace to war with Rome, telling them not to obey them. They also fired and pillaged the villages of those who refused to comply." (*JA*, XX, 172). See also *JA*, XX, 162–166; *JW*, II, 25, VI, 264–265.

result was that after the destruction, the Jews of Palestine revolted twice more: in 117 in the War of Quietus and in 132 in the Bar Kokhba Revolt.

Therefore, the main question is: What was the *casus belli* for the Bar Kokhba revolt? Why did the Jewish population set out once again in open rebellion against the Romans? It would perhaps be possible to include among the causes for the Great Revolt antecedent conditions that—in the period before and during the beginning of the Great Revolt—were regarded by the rebels as *realistic considerations*. And these may have increased expectations and hope and perhaps even their chances of success in their military struggle against the Romans.⁴

By *antecedent conditions*, I mean mainly the unstable state of the Empire during the reign of Nero and in the years following his death, a state of internal unrest⁵ and of revolts in various parts of the Empire: Britain, Gaul, and Spain.⁶ The rebels also hoped that after the uprising in Judaea, the Parthians would join their struggle against the Romans in view of the renewed hostilities

See also Marx Andrew Brighton, *The Sicarii in Josephus's Judean War: Rhetorical Analyses and Historical Observation* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009).

- 4 See "The Jewish revolutionary party, whose numbers and fortunes were at their zenith, seized the occasion of the turbulence of these times for insurrection. As a result of these vast disturbances the whole of the Eastern Empire was in the balance; the insurgents were fired with hopes of its acquisition, their opponents feared its loss. For the Jews hoped that all their fellow-countrymen beyond the Euphrates would join with them in revolt; while the Romans, on their side, were occupied with their neighbours the Gauls, and the Celts were in motion." (*JW*, I, 2). For realistic considerations before the outbreak of the Great Revolt, see Michael Avi Yonah, "The Zealots Separated the Jews from the Culture of the Ancient World," *Cathedra* 1 (1976): 57: "As for the chances of the rebels, in effect they did not err in their calculations but erred in the timing. All the factors on which they depended were effective: a revolt against Nero in Rome broke out, a revolt against the Romans in Gaul broke out, and after all the Parthians were prepared for war. Help also arrived from Babylon and mainly from the Jews of Adiabene." See also Menahem Stern, "The Zealots and the Sicarii Branches of a National Freedom Movement," *Cathedra* 1 (1976): 45: "In 66, also because of realistic considerations, there was perhaps some kind of feeling amongst people that they could succeed in view of the fact that the Roman legions were defeated by the Parthians in the year 62, and here the legions of Syria were beaten by the rebels themselves." See recently James S. McLaren, "Going to War against Rome: The Motivation of the Jewish Rebels," in *The Jewish Revolt against Rome: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Malden Popvic (Leiden: Brill, 2011): 129–153.
- 5 See Albino Garzetti, *From Tiberius to the Antonines: A History of the Roman Empire AD 14–192*, trans. J.R. Foster (London Methuen, 1974), 148–170.
- 6 See *JW*, III, 2ff.; IV, 440ff. See also Garzetti (previous note), 171–181 for his detailed review of the various uprisings throughout the Empire against the rule of Nero and 747–748 for the bibliography on the revolts against Nero.

between Parthians and Romans over the Armenian question.⁷ Another factor on which hopes of the rebels may have hung was that the Jews of the Diaspora, in particular the Jews of Babylon and Mesopotamia, would join the rebellion.⁸ The expectations and hopes of the rebels were disappointed, and the Romans managed to overcome temporary difficulties.⁹ The Parthians not only did not join the Jewish rebels, but even reached a political arrangement with Rome,¹⁰ while the Jews of the Diaspora did not act in close cooperation with the rebels in Judaea.¹¹

7 See *JW*, II, 387–380, for evidence of the hopes of the Jews for assistance from the Parthians, which were based on the renewal of hostilities between the Romans and Parthians after the latter had deposed Rhadamistus, King of Armenia, and crowned Tiridates, brother of Vologases I, King of Parthia in Rhadamistus' stead. See Karl-Heinz Ziegler, *Die Beziehungen zwischen Rom und dem Partherreich* (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1964), 67–68; Tessa Rajak, "The Parthians in Josephus," in *Das Partherreich und Seine Zeugnisse: The Arsacid Empire: Sources and Documentation*, ed. Josef Wiesehöfer (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1998), 309–324.

8 See *JW*, II, 388: "Unless someone extends his hopes beyond the Euphrates and supposes that his compatriots from Adiabene are joining the defense." On the possible considerations of the Adiabeniens to participate in the revolt in Judaea, see Jacob Neusner, "The Jews East of the Euphrates and the Roman Empire 1. 1st–3rd Centuries AD" *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* II, 9.1 (1976): 53–54; Richard Lee Kalmin, "The Adiabeniens Royal Family in Rabbinic Literature of Late Antiquity," in *Tiferet leYisrael*, Jubilee Volume in Honor of Israel Francus, eds. Joel Roth, Menahem Schmelzer, Yaacov Francus (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 2010): 61–77; Lawrence H. Schiffman, "The Conversion of the Royal House of Adiabene in Josephus and Rabbinic Sources," in *Josephus, Judaism and Christianity*, eds. Louis Feldman, Gohei Hata (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987): 293–312.

9 See Garzetti (above, note 5).

10 Ziegler (above, note 7), 78–81. After the defeat of the Romans in Rhandaia in 62 CE, an arrangement was made between them and the Parthians, according to which the Romans recognized Tiridates as King of Armenia, and Tiridates agreed to come to Rome and receive his crown from the hands of Nero. This is implied in the speech of Agrippa II: *JW*, II, 370. "With the suppression of the revolt in Judaea, Vologases the Parthian sent a golden crown to Titus in honor of his victory over the Jews." See *JW*, VII, 105; Tacitus, *History*, IV, 5, 2.

11 Cassius Dio, 64: 3, 4, notes that the Jews were generally assisted by their coreligionists within the borders of the Roman Empire, and even beyond the Euphrates. But *JW*, II, 520, is the only evidence for the assistance that the Jews in the Diaspora extended to the rebels in Judaea; Josephus notes the valiant deeds of Monobazus and Cenedeus, two of the kinsmen of Monobazus, King of Adiabene. See Neuser (above, note 8), 53–54, who infers from the speech of Agrippa, that before the revolt, the Jews had sent delegations to the Euphrates area in order to recruit Jewish fighters (*JW*, II, 388). The Jews of Babylon did

The events that preceded the Great Revolt and its various developments show how difficult it is to examine retrospectively how realistic were the estimations and considerations of its contemporary participants.¹² Before the events of the years 115 to 117 and on the eve of the Bar Kokhba revolt, as will be shown below, there were no antecedent conditions similar to those mentioned above that could possibly have allowed any chance of success to be taken into consideration by those rebels. With the accession of Hadrian to power in 117 CE, the Parthian wars of his predecessor Trajan came to an end. In order to end the continuous state of war that had existed between the Romans and the Parthians, the emperor retreated from the conquered areas of the Parthian Empire. The years of his rule are marked by a desire to unify all the areas ruled by Rome throughout the Empire, and one of the bywords of that period was a return to the policy of *Pax Romana*, the Roman peace. During his reign, there were no signs of internal instability or unrest in the provinces. Consequently, it would be difficult to point to any real factor that could have instilled hope among the population in Palestine that an attempt to liberate itself from Roman domination would be successful.¹³

The events of 123–124 CE,¹⁴ which seem to indicate a renewal of hostilities between the Parthians and the Romans, could not have served as a source of encouragement for the Jewish rebels, since these disputes were quickly settled by Hadrian through conciliatory gestures. The chances that the Jews of the Diaspora would take part in the revolt were slight: If one takes into account that this Jewry had already suffered a decisive blow in the revolts that broke

not find sufficient pretext to join the rebels. The pretext was given to them later on, when the Temple was destroyed, but by then it was too late for the rebels in Judaea.

- 12 Martin Goodman, *The Ruling Class of Judaea: The Origins of the Jewish Revolt Against Rome 66–70 AD*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
- 13 For a summary of the period of Hadrian's rule, see Thornton, "Hadrian and his Reign," *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* 11, 2 (1975): 433–476; Anthony Richard Birley, *Hadrian*. And see our discussion below, 105–110.
- 14 On the events of 123 CE, see Ziegler (above, note 7), 105–110. On the possibility of renewed hostilities between the Parthians and the Romans, see *Historia Augusta*, Hadrian, 12, 8 and the commentary of, 93. Neilson C. Debevoise, *A Political History of Parthia* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), 241–242; Ronald Syme, "Hadrian and the Vassal Princes," *Athenaeum* 59 (1981): 273–282. On the events of 129 CE and the visit by Hadrian to Cappadocia, see *Historia Augusta*, Hadrian, 9–13, 8. On the refusal of Pharasmanes and the peaceful resolution of the conflict by Hadrian, see 13, 21. See also the conclusion, Syme, 275. On the different date of Hadrian's visit to Cappadocia in 131 CE, see Albert, Brian Bosworth, "Arrian and the Alani," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 81 (1977): 228.

out in its important centers (such as Egypt, Cyrenaica and Mesopotamia), it is not reasonable to have hoped that this population would be capable of being an active ally of the Bar Kokhba fighters.¹⁵

Without clear conditions before the Bar Kokhba Revolt that could be interpreted as realistic calculations or considerations for rebellion,¹⁶ researchers who have dealt with the motivations for it were forced to attribute them to reasons that are described in the sources as immediate motives for the outbreak of the revolt, such as the establishment of Aelia Capitolina and the proscription of circumcision.¹⁷ These sources that describe such motives are inherently problematic and raise many difficulties when confronted with each other.¹⁸ In dealing with them, researchers have been drawn into discussing cause and effect. Did the decrees of Hadrian precede the revolt, and it broke out as a result of their imposition? Perhaps the decrees were a result of the revolt, the stubborn nature of the Jewish fighters, and the damage they caused to the Roman army. Perhaps Hadrian imposed his decrees and prohibitions in order to suppress the revolt and punish the rebels?¹⁹

Researchers dealing with rebellions in the ancient world in general and in Judaea in particular have adopted an approach that originates from studies on anti-imperialist rebellions and social revolutions of the modern era.²⁰ Such an

15 See our discussion below, xx.

16 Oppenheimer, "Hideouts," 256. In his opinion, "the Revolt did not break out spontaneously, borne on waves of messianic fervor, but was properly projected, based on realistic calculations." This planning that Oppenheimer found was in the hideouts in the Judaeian lowlands that were prepared by the rebels before the revolt. But even if we link these hideouts to the revolt, this does not yet prove, in my opinion, that there were realistic calculations among the considerations of the rebels. On this matter, see the comments of Yigael Yadin, "Comments on the Rule of Hideaways in Bar Kokhba's Strategy, and Some Notes on Documents of Bar Kokhba," *Cathedra* 26 (1982): 44 [in Hebrew].

17 Cassius Dio, 69: 12, 1–2—the erection of Aelia Capitolina; *Historia Augusta*, Hadrian, 14, 2—Prohibition of circumcision. For our discussion of these sources, see below, 121–135.

18 On Cassius Dio, see Stern, *Authors*, 11, 393–395; Fergus Millar, *A Study of Cassius Dio* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971); On the *Historia Augusta*, see Joseph Geiger, "The Decree on Circumcision and the Bar Kokhba Revolt," *Zion* 41 (1986): 139–140 [in Hebrew]; Stern, *Authors*, 11, 612–617. See also Klaus Peter Johnne, *Kaiserbiographie und Senatsaristokratie. Untersuchungen zur Datierung und Sozialen Herkunft der Historia Augusta*, Berlin Akademie-Verlag, 1976.

19 Eusebius, *HE*, iv, 6, 1–4. And see our discussion below, 121–128.

20 Alexander Fuchs, "Patterns and Characteristics of the Socio-economic Revolution in Greece from the 4th to the 2nd Century BCE," *Proceedings of the National Israel Academy for Sciences*, v, 3, 1973; Rappaport, "Comments," 42–46; Per Bilde, "The Causes of the Jewish War According to Josephus," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 10 (1979): 179–202; Richard

approach tries to create a standard model of a revolt or revolution that could be used to examine the causes, processes, and outcomes of rebellions and revolutions throughout the world in different historical periods.²¹ Under the influence of these studies, researchers were no longer satisfied with a discussion of the immediate motive or motives for a reversal of a continued state of dissatisfaction that leads from sporadic acts against the foreign conqueror to open rebellion. Instead they have tried to trace a wide range of factors in all kinds of spheres—such as political, social, economic, demographic, ideological, religious, and even psychological—factors that continued over a long period of time and led toward that fateful decision to rebel against foreign rule.²² The main question that this approach raises is the justification of this research method, that is to say, whether the historian who is engaged in the ancient history is permitted to adopt a model or models of rebellions and revolutions in modern history to use to examine the motives, processes, and outcomes of revolts in the ancient world.

Another difficulty in this approach involves the subjectivity of the historian who chooses by personal preference one model or part of a model and ignores other models. The question is what guarantees exist that his choice is the most suitable one? Are a few points of contact or resemblance between the model and the revolution in question sufficient to justify the use of that specific model? Do a few points of resemblance that appear through a comparison between the population of various Roman provinces and the population of natives in some place in the modern world provide justification for studying and drawing analogies between the two?²³ These difficulties require

A. Horsley, "The Sicarii: Ancient Jewish Terrorists," *Journal of Religion* 59 (1979): 435–458; idem, "Ancient Jewish Banditry and the Revolt Against Rome AD 66–70," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 43 (1981): 409–432; Cecil Roth, "The Jewish Revolt Against Rome," *Commentary* 27 (1959): 513–522.

21 See Thomas H. Greene, *Comparative Revolutionary Movements* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1974).

22 On this issue, see Israel Lee Levine, "The Zealots at the End of the Second Temple Period as a Historiographical Problem," *Cathedra* 1 (1976): 39–56 [in Hebrew]; Uriel Rappaport, "Jews and Non-Jews in Eretz Israel and the Great Revolt against Rome," *Tarbiz* 47 (1988): 1–14 [in Hebrew]. See also Levine's review of Moshe Aberbach, *The Roman-Jewish War* (London: The Jewish Quarterly in association with R. Golub 1966) in *Judaism* 20 (1971): 244–248.

23 See W. La Barre, "Materials for a History of Studies of Crisis Cult: A Bibliographic Essay," *Current Anthropology* 12 (1971): 3–44. Note his remark on page 27: "Theories of causality have suffered from the tunnel vision of confinement usually to a single preferred academic discipline, and the necessity of a hostile approach is demonstrated."

that the historian who is engaged in the study of the ancient world adopt such methods with reservations and great caution, although they should not be totally ignored.²⁴ A few researchers of the Bar Kokhba revolt, because of the problems in determining the immediate causes for the outbreak of the revolt, have preferred to deal with ongoing factors that led toward the occurrence of the Second Revolt, factors that originated in the events in Palestine during the years 70–132 CE.²⁵ The viewpoint of the historian dealing with a very eventful period has to be multifaceted; and it cannot focus, for example, only on the internal events in Palestine and be detached from external events connected with the global system of the ancient world.²⁶ Additionally, it cannot deal with matters concerning Provincia Judaea only from the Roman viewpoint while ignoring internal Jewish developments during those years.²⁷

In this book, I shall try to merge the two together and examine, on the one hand, the status of Judaea as a Roman province in which the inhabitants had tried and failed a short time earlier to free themselves from the burden of Roman rule through military means. Were the Jews prepared to reconcile themselves to Roman rule after the catastrophe of 70 CE? How did Jewish society rehabilitate itself in the various spheres of life: religious, social, and economic? On the other hand, how did the Roman government deal with Provincia Judaea as part of the eastern front of the Roman Empire, a province known for the rebellious character of its inhabitants, as proven in the Great Revolt and the other revolt in the Diaspora? An examination of the events that occurred during those years is meant to advance the discussion of the question of causes for the outbreak of the Bar Kokhba revolt, and it will be done through a review of a wide variety of subjects derived from available sources.

In my discussion, I shall draw upon two studies by Stephen Dyson, which although written in the 1970s, still constitute important and basic research on a comparison between the revolts against Rome throughout the Empire in

24 See the reservations of Rappaport, "Comments," 45–46. See also Kasher (above, note 1), 19, note 29, who severely criticized the attempts of Horsley (above, note 20), and especially his article in the *Journal of Religion*: "His articles are based on anachronistic analogies with modern underground movements in Europe, Asia and Africa, something in which an intelligent historian is prohibited to err."

25 See Applebaum, "Second Revolt," 39–44; idem, *Prolegomena*, 1–22; Oppenheimer, "Jewish Community in Galilee," 66.

26 See Büchler, in his article "The Economic Condition of Judaea."

27 Glen Bowersock, "A Roman Perspective on the Bar-Kochba War," in *Approaches to Ancient Judaism*, 11, 131–141.

different periods.²⁸ Dyson found a great deal of resemblance between the different revolts, in spite of the differences in time and distance. This similarity led him to the conclusion that there were invariable processes and factors that served as a background for the outbreak of most of the revolts against Rome. Dyson, however, thinks that this framework should not include the rebellions against the Roman Empire in its eastern parts, among them Judaea, since these revolts—unlike the ones in the western parts of the Empire—were usually based in the main on religious motives.²⁹ Nevertheless, a number of Dyson's basic assumptions deserve attention, and it would be worthwhile to make use of them in my discussion of the causes for the Bar Kokhba revolt.

Dyson claimed that the revolts should not be considered merely as political phenomena and therefore should not be discussed only as a military and administrative problem; rather, they should be seen as complex phenomena that are part of a composite picture of social, economic, and psychological changes. There are many motives for rebellion, and the central one is the social motive.³⁰ In his first study, Dyson focused on the assumption that the revolts were due to the tension created by cumulative pressure on a society undergoing a process of acculturation. This assumption was expanded in his second study into a more comprehensive perception in which a revolt was part of the social, economic, and psychological changes that the rebellious society was undergoing.³¹ In the context of this perception, he found a number of phenomena and processes common to all the revolts he had examined. A summary of the conclusions of Dyson regarding the processes that precede revolts in general:

- (1) Rebels were mostly from the younger generation, which means they do not belong as an age group to the generation that had been alive and active during the Roman conquest and are therefore not the population that had caused the conquest or opposed it. The very fact that they are a

28 Greg Woolf, "Provincial Revolts in the Early Roman Empire," in *The Jewish Revolt Against Rome: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Mladen Popovic (Leiden: Brill, 2011): 27–44. On page 32, note 18, he refers to Dyson's article: Steven L. Dyson, L. "Native Revolts in the Roman Empire." *Historia* 20 (1971): 239–274 arguing "This paper remains the most sophisticated study of the phenomenon to date, with its argument that some revolts were tensions generated by the transformation of local societies in the process of incorporation into a wider world." See also Steven L. Dyson, "Native Revolt Patterns in the Roman Empire." *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* 11, 3 (1975): 138–175.

29 Dyson, "Revolt Patterns," 139.

30 Dyson, "Revolt Patterns," 171; idem, "Revolts," 267.

31 Dyson, "Revolt Patterns," 140.

new generation is of double importance. On one hand, they are suspected of subversion and rebellion by the Roman authorities, and on the other hand, since they had lived all their lives under occupation, it is easier for them to adhere to the memories of the past that serve as a unifying factor and provide for the solidarity of purpose.

- (2) Members of the new generation did not take the Roman occupation seriously, at least not at first, since their main efforts are invested in internal disputes.
- (3) While all kinds of activities distract the minds of the subjected people, the Romans tightened their administrative and military supervision and even obtained cooperation from the conquered people, which appeared to them to be a sign of pacification.
- (4) As the subjected population became wiser and realized the meaning of foreign occupation, a period of tension and insecurity arrived, which provided fertile ground for the appearance of charismatic leaders and the figures of messianic prophets.
- (5) The final stage was the transition from a state of political, social, and economic dissatisfaction to open rebellion against the foreign conqueror, which broke out after some immediate cause.³²

I will make use of some of these conclusions in my following discussion of the causes for the Second Revolt under Bar Kokhba. In my study of the events in

32 See Dyson, "Revolts" 239–274. From a study of the sources that describe Roman rule in Palestine from its beginnings, it is possible to reconstruct the course of events similar to the way in which Dyson reconstructed it in describing the revolts against Rome. But in Judaea, this course was repeated twice: the first time during the period from the Roman conquest in 64 BCE until the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE, and the second time during the period from the destruction of the Temple until the high point of the process in the outbreak of the Bar-Kokhba revolt in 132 CE. This repetition of the course of events reinforces the question that I posed above, regarding the causes for the outbreak of the revolt in 132 CE. It does not seem reasonable that after more than 150 years of Roman domination, and in view of the outcome of the Great Revolt, the Jewish population in the provinces did not realize the expected dangers if another attempt was made for liberation through military means from the burden of Roman rule. Nevertheless, the Second Revolt did break out in 132 CE. As said above, in addition to the immediate causes for the outbreak of the revolt, I would like to deal as well with the continuing reasons for it that began ever since the conquest by Rome in 64 BCE. However, my discussion will focus on the events in Judaea during the years 70–132 CE and examine whether it will be possible to deduce, from all the events that occurred during those years, the continuously enduring factors that eventually led to the outbreak of the Bar-Kokhba revolt.

Judea during those years, I shall examine the internal and external factors that have influenced them, such as changes implemented by the Roman authorities in the province immediately after the suppression of the revolt in 70 CE. Some of these changes are connected with the Roman army—with its composition, size, and deployment during the years 70–135 CE. One of the main issues in this discussion is the part played by the army in calming emotions or aggravating them in the province; also their role in becoming one of the main factors for the outbreak of the revolt. My discussion will also deal with the agrarian factor, and I will examine whether during those years there were events that indicate socioeconomic motives for the revolt.

Another issue is linked with the general question of the political status of Rome in the East from 70 to 136 CE, especially the policies of Hadrian in the East in general and in Judea in particular. This issue is important because it provides context that facilitates understanding what has been defined as the national-religious motivations for the outbreak of the revolt—that is to say, whatever was created as a result of the general policy of the emperor put national existence into danger because of the circumcision decrees and the establishment of Aelia Capitolina.

1.1 Immediate Changes after 70 CE

In the relationship between the Jews and the Romans, the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple was regarded as the end of a period and the beginning of a new era.³³ The course, suppression, and results of the Great Revolt were ascribed to intentional Roman policy. As Alon described the aim: “These facts prove that the Romans did not consider their war against Judea to be directed against a given movement of rebels within the nation (to which the majority were opposed) in order ‘to extirpate the evil from its midst’ and restore the original position, . . . It appears that from the outset of the revolt

33 On the new calendar that began with the destruction of the Temple, see Smallwood, 331, and Note 1. This study debates the question whether the year 70 CE was a kind of watershed in the history of Israel. See the anthology Daniel Schwartz, Zeev Weiss, eds., *Was 70 CE a Watershed in Jewish History? On Jews and Judaism before and After the Destruction of the Second Temple* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), and the introduction by Daniel Schwartz: “Was 70 CE a Watershed in Jewish History? Three Stages of Modern Scholarship, and a Renewed Effort.” See also the discussion of Robert Goldenberg, “The Destruction of the Jerusalem Temple. Its Meaning and Its Consequences,” *Cambridge History of Judaism*, IV (2006): 191–205; Martin Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem: The Clash of Ancient Civilizations* (London: New York: Allen Lane, 2007), Ch. 12.

the Romans waged war against the Jewish people in Eretz-Israel, with the purpose of depriving them mainly of their political autonomy . . . and, above all, of undermining the nation which the figure of Bar Kokhba physically and spiritually, so that the Palestinian Jews should no longer be able to rise up against them and threaten their dominion.”³⁴

Research on the immediate and subsequent results of the Great Revolt focused on a wide variety of subjects concerning many aspects of life, such as the outcome of the defeat in terms of demography and settlement, the change in the status of Provincia Judaea and its socioeconomic situation, and especially the different aspects of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple.³⁵ Researchers stress that these were changes directed against the Jewish population in Palestine, and from the sources (*Tosefta*, *Sotah*, 66: 11–14; 4 Ezra, 8:21–22; 2 Baruch, 1–12), one learns that the immediate effect of the destruction was, as Safrai said, “The hard conditions after the defeat, imposed on the people, consternation, sorrow and pain. A large majority of the people was seized with anguish and amazement, and this was not an immediate and initial reaction to the war of the destruction. Many broke away from leading normal lives, were steeped in despair and ceased to fulfill their duties.”³⁶

This approach, which regarded the suppression of the revolt, with its climax in the destruction of the Temple, as a great catastrophe and serious crisis for the Jews of Palestine, has recently aroused criticism, directed mainly at,

- (a) The use of the sources mentioned above as testament to the atmosphere of despair and devastation of the Jews in Palestine after the suppression of the revolt.³⁷
- (b) Exaggeration in the size and extent of the catastrophe and crisis among the people in Judaea in 70 CE.

The Talmudic sources, which serve as testimony to the reaction of the Jews to the destruction and its outcome, were rejected by Goodblatt in his article:

34 Gedalyahu Alon, “Rabban Johanan B. Zakkai’s Removal to Jabneh,” in *Jews, Judaism and the Classical World: Studies in Jewish History in the Times of the Second Temple and Talmud*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1977): 289–290. Gedalyahu Alon, “The Burning of the Temple,” *ibid.*, 252–268; Safrai, “Recovery of the Yishuv,” 22–25.

35 See Alon, *Jews in their Land*, 41–85; Stern, “Roman Government,” 1–7; Safrai, “Recovery of the Yishuv,” 18–24.

36 Safrai, “Recovery of the Yishuv,” 24. See also Alon, *Jews in their Land*, 41–42.

37 Martin Goodman, “Religious Reactions to 70: The Limitation of the Evidence,” in *Was 70 CE a Watershed in Jewish History? On Jews and Judaism before and After the Destruction of the Second Temple*, eds. Daniel Schwarz, Zeev Weiss (Leiden: Brill, 2012): 509–516.

“The Jews of Eretz Israel in the Years 70–132.” In his opinion, they were banal and cannot be dated to the years after the Great Revolt.³⁸

In the research literature that deals with the apocalyptic texts mentioned above, the two main claims are that one cannot learn from them about the reaction of all the Jews in Palestine to the destruction in 70 CE and that one should not regard the response of apocalyptic Jews to the destruction only in relation to these sources.³⁹ Under the heading “First Century Apocalypse,”⁴⁰ Neusner discusses 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch. These sources are, in his view, the works of apocalyptic Jewry that tried to cope with the destruction and its outcome in its own special way: in a passive manner, intended mainly to justify God’s punishment of Israel for their sins in the present but with hope for salvation at the end of time. He saw in this line of thought and reaction only one of the four responses to the destruction of the Temple, and therefore his view does not reflect the general atmosphere that prevailed among the Jews of Palestine after the destruction.⁴¹ According to him, this apocalyptic trend of

38 See Goodblatt, “Jews of Eretz Israel,” 155–184. David Goodblatt, “Iudaea Between the Revolts: Trends in Research Scholarship,” in *Jüdische Geschichte in hellenistisch-römischer Zeit, Wege der Forschung-von Alten zum Neuen* Schürer, ed. Aharon Oppenheimer (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1999): 101–118. See also Anthony J. Saldarini, “Varieties of Rabbinic Response to the Destruction of the Temple,” in *SBL Seminar Papers 1982*, ed. Kenneth H. Richards (Chico: Scholars Press, 1982): 437–458. Saldarini reviewed four different rabbinical sources, of which the contents and various world views of their authors do not correspond to the above, source. From them, he deduced two other reactions to the loss of the Temple, the results of which were the composition of the Mishna and the Bar Kokhba Revolt. See also Shaye J.D. Cohen, “The Significance of Yavneh: Pharisees, Rabbis and the End of Jewish Sectarianism,” in *The Significance of Yavneh and Other Essays in Jewish Hellenism* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 44–70 [*Hebrew Union College Annual* 55 (1984): 27–53]. On 62–63, Cohen claims that the atmosphere of despair and crisis in reaction to the destruction, as described in apocalyptic sources, does not exist at all in Tannaitic literature.

39 See George W.E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Historical and Literary Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press 1981), 280–309; 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 270–288. Under the title of “Apocalyptic Response to the Fall of Jerusalem,” Nickelsburg included 2 Baruch, 4 Ezra, The Vision of Abraham, 3 Baruch, and the Gospel according to Matthew. In the 2nd ed., he omitted the last two. See also Dereck Daschke, *City of Ruins: Mourning the Destruction of Jerusalem through Jewish Apocalypse* (Leiden: Brill 2010).

40 See Jacob Neusner, *Judaism. The Evidence of the Mishnah* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 28–44 [2nd ed., augmented] (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987).

41 Idem, “Judaism in a Time of Crisis: Four Responses to the Destruction of the Second Temple,” *Judaism* 21 (1972): 314–327. See also Jacob Neusner, *How Important Was the*

thought was a form of mourning for a world already in a state of ruin and was in fact the ultimate stage of its influence on Jewish history.⁴²

Neusner claimed that the two sources represented a single stream of thought in the Jewry of that period. In opposition to him, Sayler and Kolenkow claim that although 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch deal with the same subjects, their approach and response to the destruction are completely different.⁴³ Moreover, from among those very apocalyptic circles there emerged works of a different kind altogether such as the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, in which the response to the destruction of the Second Temple and its outcome was an active one with the initiative of restoring the sacrificial cult, the return to God, and the liberation and rehabilitation of the ruins of Jerusalem.⁴⁴ Another source of that period, Pseudo-Philo,⁴⁵ does not see the salvation of the people only at the

Destruction of the Second Temple in the Formation of Rabbinic Judaism (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 2006).

42 Neusner (above, note 8), 43–44.

43 Anitra B. Kolenkow, "The Fall of the Temple and the Coming of the End: The Spectrum and Process of Apocalyptic Argument in 2 Baruch and Other Authors," in *SBL Seminar Papers 1982*, ed. Kenneth H. Richards (Chico: Scholars Press 1982): 243–250; Gwendolyn Sayler, "2 Baruch, A Story of Grief and Consolation," *ibid.*, 497–499. See also *idem*, *Have the Promises Failed? A Literary Analysis of 2 Baruch* (Chico: Scholars Press 1984). Recently, Katel Berthelot and Geza Xeravits summarized the issue. See Katel Berthelot, "Is God Unfair? The Fourth Book of Ezra as a Response to the Crisis of 70 CE," in *Judaism in Crisis: Crisis as a Catalyst in Jewish Cultural History*, eds. Armin Lange, K.F. Diethard Römheld, Matthias Weingold (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011): 165–181; Geza G. Xeravits, "Conflicting Ideas about the Temple in 2 Baruch 4 and 6," *Ibid.*, 153–164.

See *Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch, Reconstruction after the Fall*, eds. Matthias Henze, Gabriele Boccaccini (Brill: Leiden, 2013) and *Interpreting Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch*, eds. Gabriele Boccaccini, Jason M. Zurawski (London: Bloomsbury, 2014). The two volumes are proceedings of the Sixth Henocho Seminar, which met on June 26–30, 2011, in Italy. They include a variety of articles on: *Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch*. Matthew Henze, in his article "Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch: the Status Questionis," in *Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch, Reconstruction after the Fall*, eds. Matthias Henze, Gabriele Boccaccini (Brill: Leiden, 2013): 3–23, reviewed the recent research on the two books and added, on pages 23–27, a bibliography for the years 2000–2012.

44 James R. Mueller, "The Apocalypse of Abraham and the Destruction of the Second Jewish Temple," in *SBL Seminar Papers 1982*, ed. Kenneth H. Richards (Chico: Scholars Press, 1982): 341–349. See also the article by Sayler (above, note 43), 500.

45 On the dating of Pseudo-Philo after the year 70 CE, see Michael Wadsworth, "A New Pseudo-Philo," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 29 (1978): 186–191; against this dating, see Nickelsburg (above, note 7), 268, and in his article "Good and Bad Leaders in Pseudo Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum," in *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism*, eds. John J. Collins, George W.E. Nickelsburg (Chico: Scholars Press, 1980): 63–64. See also the

eschatological level. The work is entirely suffused with optimism and hope for the help of God in the present time.⁴⁶ Palestine Jewry after the year 70 CE was forced to cope with the new realities: Jerusalem destroyed, the Temple destroyed, the cancellation of the religious worship, and the loss of the high priesthood. The extent of the crisis that the population experienced is related to the estimated importance and centrality of the city and its institutions in the consciousness of the people in the period before the suppression of the revolt in 70 CE.

Alon, who dealt with this question, ascribed a central position to Jerusalem and its institutions. In his view, Jerusalem was: "... as though the entire country had been compressed into the environs (*tehum*) of Jerusalem; as though the whole socio-political reality of Judaea derived from, and was based on the fact that it contained the Holy City." The Temple served "above all the focus of the great religious events in the life of the nation, such as the major pilgrimage festivals, especially Passover and Sukkot."

The loss of the High Priesthood when the Temple was destroyed "must be seen, then as the loss of one of the mainstays of Jewish national, political, and religious existence. That loss could not but leave behind it great void in the life of the nation."⁴⁷ In view of these things, Alon challenged the interpretation given in *Avot de Rabbi Natan*, from which it may be understood that a substitute could be found for the destroyed Temple and its cult in a new religious and

article of Alexander Zéron, who pushed the date forward to the 3rd and 4th centuries, "Erwägungen zu Pseudo-Philos Quellen und Zeit," *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period* 1 (1980): 50–52. Howard Jacobson, *A Commentary of Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum: With Latin Text and English Translation* (Leiden: Brill, 1996). Bruce N. Fisk, *Do You Remember?: Scripture, Story and Exegesis in the Rewritten Bible of Pseudo-Philo* (Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), chapter 2, "Date and Provenance: The State of the Question," 34–45. His conclusion in regard to the date is "it must be admitted, regrettably, that LAB-scholarship to date has failed to establish a precise date or social setting for the composition of LAB" (44–45).

46 See the article by Sayler (above, note 43), 499; Goodblatt, "Jews of Eretz Israel," 161. See also Manuel Vogel, "Tempel und Tempelkult in Pseudo-Philos Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum," in *Gemeinde ohne Tempel, Zur Substituierung und Transformation der Jerusalemer Tempels und Seines Kults im Alten Testament, Antiken Judentum und frühen Christentum*, eds. Beate Ego, Armin Lange, Kathrin Ehlers, Peter Pilhofer (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999): 251–263. Daniel J. Harrington, "The 'holy land' in Pseudo-Philo, 4 Ezra, and 2 Baruch," in *Emanuel: Studies in Hebrew Bible, Septuagint and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov*, eds. Shalom M. Paul et al. (Leiden, Brill, 2003): 661–672.

47 Alon, *Jews in their Land*, 46–48.

spiritual reality that was focused on the Torah and righteous deeds.⁴⁸ For him, this interpretation was a generalization and irrelevant and ignored the terrible catastrophe and great danger facing the nation after the destruction of the Temple: "The Destruction of the Temple . . . not only did it wipe out a symbol of national pride for Jews at home and abroad and tarnish their image in the eyes of the nations; not only did it shake the very foundations of the Jew's belief in his religion and in the future of his people; it cut deeper. With the altar gone, the nation was confronted by a gaping vacuum, one which the generation of survivors had to fill, and fill quickly, if the people were to live on."⁴⁹

My intention is to contrast the words of Alon with the research of Neusner, who confronted the same questions in his article "Judaism in a Time of Crisis: Four Responses to the Destruction of the Second Temple." This research clarifies why the assessment of Alon is not valid for the general Jewish population in Palestine: "But long before 70 the Temple had been rejected by some Jewish groups. Its sanctity had been arrogated by others and for large numbers of ordinary Jews outside of Palestine as well as substantial numbers within, the Temple was a remote and, if holy, an unimportant place."⁵⁰ Neusner dealt with two reactions to the destruction connected with the attitude of some part of the Jewish population toward Jerusalem, the Temple, and the high priesthood, reactions that were totally different from the one described by Alon. These were the reactions of the Dead Sea Sect (Qumran community) and the Christian-Jewish community that had given up their interest in the Temple and its cult a long while before it was destroyed in 70 CE. Their main criticism was against the Temple, its cultic rituals, and its priests.⁵¹ In fact, even apocalyptic

48 *Avot de Rabbi Natan*, version A. iv: "On one occasion Rabban Yohanan b. Zakkai was on his way out of Jerusalem and Rabbi Joshua was walking behind him and he saw the Temple in ruins. Rabbi Joshua said: Woe to us that it is destroyed! This is the place which atoned for the sins of Israel! He said to him: My son, do not feel bad, we have another atonement which is as good, and what is it? Acts of hesed, as it is said: 'For I desired hesed [R.V.: mercy], and not sacrifice' (Hos. 6:6) [ed. Schechter, 21]; ויחנן בן זכאי; פעם אחת היה רבן יוחנן בן זכאי; ויהי רבי יהושע הולך אחריו, וראה בית המקדש חרב. אמר רבי יהושע: אוי לנו על זה שהוא חרב. מקום שמכפרים בו עונותיהם של ישראל. אמר לו: בני, אל ירע לך. יש לנו כפרה אחת שהיא כמותה, ואיזה? זה גמילות חסדים. שנאמר: "כי חסד חפצתי ולא זבח." שכן מצינו בדניאל איש חמודות, שהיה מתעסק בגמילות חסדים. ומה הן גמילות חסדים שהיה דניאל מתעסק בהם? אם תאמר עולות וזבחים מקריב בבבל, והלא כבר נאמר (דברים יב) "השמר לך פן תעלה עולותיך בכל מקום אשר תראה כי אם במקום אשר יבחר ה' באחד שבטיך שם תעלה עולותיך."

49 Alon, *Jews in their Land*, 50.

50 Neusner (above, note 41), 314.

51 *Ibid.*, 317–320.

circles were not disturbed by the loss of the sacrificial cult and the destruction of the Temple.⁵²

In Neusner's view, the literary source in *Avot de Rabbi Natan* was the reaction of the Perushim (Pharisees) to the Temple's destruction, since they regarded the Torah and righteous deeds as a replacement for the Temple and its cult.⁵³ But he dated the source as being before the year 70, and attributes it to a demand by Jews of that period for the purification of the cult, which caused the Perushim to limit the centrality and importance of the Temple and its cultic rituals.⁵⁴ In view of this and my claim above regarding the sources, it is not necessary to exaggerate the extent of the crisis that affected Jewry after the year 70.⁵⁵ I should also note in this connection that one cannot include religious persecution against the Jews among the results of the Great Revolt.⁵⁶ The Jewish people continued to enjoy their status as a *religio licita*; although after the destruction they supposedly had to pay for their religious freedom with the Jewish tax that was collected from all the Jews in the Empire.⁵⁷ Evidence for

52 Cohen (above, note 38), 45. On opinions against the cult in the Book IV of the Sibylline Oracles, see Goodblatt, "Jews of Eretz Israel," 161. See Kenneth Willis Clark, "Worship in the Jerusalem Temple after AD 70," *New Testament Studies* 6 (1960): 269–280. [Republished in *The Gentile Bias, and other Essays* (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 9–20]. In Clark's view, some attempts were made after the destruction to offer sacrifices in Jerusalem. See also Smallwood, 346–347.

53 Neusner (above, note 41), 324–325.

54 Neusner, *ibid.*, 320–324, discusses the Perushim before the year 70.

55 Cohen (above, note 38).

56 On religious persecutions after the destruction, see Alon, *Jews in their Land*, 49–51; Safrai, "Recovery of the Yishuv," 22. For contrary views, see Goodblatt, "Jews of Eretz Israel," 160; Smallwood, 344–345. Paul Keresztes, "The Imperial Roman Government and the Christian Church I. From Nero to the Severi," *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt II*, 23/1 (1979): 257–272.

57 On the Jewish tax, see Smallwood, 371–376; For a comprehensive discussion on the subject, including bibliographical details about the Jewish tax, see Stern, *Authors*, II, no. 320, 128–131, note 320; 371–377, note 430; Lloyd A. Thompson, "Domitian and the Jewish Tax," *Historia* 31 (1982), 342–392; Martin Goodman, "The 'Fiscus Judaicus' and Gentile Attitudes to Judaism in Flavian Rome," in *Flavius Josephus and Flavian Rome*, eds. Jonathan Edmondson, Steve Mason, J.B. Rives (Oxford: 2005): 167–177; Paul Foster, "Vespasian, Nerva, Jesus and the Fiscus Judaicus," in *Israel's God and Rebecca's Children: Christology and Community in Early Judaism and Christianity, Essays in Honor of Larry W. Hurtado and Alan F. Segal*, eds. David B. Capes, et al. (Waco, TX., Baylor University Press, 2007): 303–320, 450–454; Marius Heemstra, *The Fiscus Judaicus and the Parting of the Ways* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010). See also Heemstra, Marius, "The 'Fiscus Judaicus': Its Social and Legal Impact and a Possible Relation with Josephus' Antiquities," in *Jews*

the limited scope of the crisis is the rapid rehabilitation of the Jews after the destruction.⁵⁸ In relation to the immediate changes that occurred in Judaea after the Great Revolt, I shall first examine those that were applied by the Roman administration in Provincia Judaea that were interpreted to be part of the suppression of the revolt.

Before the revolt, the procurators of Provincia Judaea were of equestrian rank and were assisted only by auxiliary troops recruited from among the citizens of Caesarea and Sebaste, which included five infantry cohorts, one cavalry squadron, and three thousand soldiers.⁵⁹ After the revolt, the province was raised to the rank of a praetorian province under a *legatus Augusti pro praetore* who commanded one legion, *Legio x Fretensis*, which was stationed in Jerusalem. This legion, together with the auxiliary forces, became a permanent guard corps in Judaea.⁶⁰ Caesarea, as the capital of the province and the seat of the procurator, continued to function with the status of *Colonia Prima Flavia Augusta Caesarea*.⁶¹ According to Josephus, the deliberate stationing of *Legio x Fretensis* in Jerusalem after the total destruction of the city could have been regarded from the Jewish viewpoint as tightening the noose around the rebellious Jewish population.

However, by examining these changes in comparison with our knowledge about the period before the Great Revolt, one sees that the measures taken by Vespasian and Titus were directed mainly against a number of weak points in Roman control of Judaea during the years 6–66 CE. The behavior and attitude of the equestrian rank procurators and the auxiliary troops at their disposal toward the Jewish population were main factors in the outbreak of the Great Revolt.⁶² The changes introduced after the revolt can therefore be seen as indicating an attempt by the Romans to improve the administration of the province. Their aim was to pacify the inhabitants, as reflected in the removal of the auxiliary forces from Caesarea and Sebaste by Vespasian. These were replaced

and Christians in the First and Second Centuries: How to Write Their History, eds. Peter J. Tomson, Joshua Schwartz. (Leiden: Brill, 2014): 327–347.

58 Goodblatt, "Jews of Eretz Israel," 162–163; Safrai, "Recovery of the Yishuv," 25–38.

59 M. Stern, "The Status of Provincia Judaea and its Governors in the Roman Empire under the Julio-Claudian Dynasty," *Eretz Israel* 10 (1971): 274–282 [in Hebrew].

60 Josephus, *BJ*, VII, 5.

61 Benjamin H. Isaac, "Roman Colonies in Judaea: The Foundation of Aelia Capitolina," 94–95.

62 Rappaport "Notes," 13. On the auxiliary forces, see Rafael Yankelevitch, "The Auxiliary Troops from Caesarea and Sebaste: A Decisive Factor in the Rebellion against Rome," *Tarbitz* 49 (1979–1980): 33–42 [in Hebrew].

by units from other areas in the Empire together with the Tenth Legion, which constituted the guard corps in Judaea.⁶³

I shall also examine these changes on a broader scale in the framework of the reorganization of the eastern border of the Empire,⁶⁴ and note that the rise in the status of Provincia Judaea made it the first province in the system of Roman provinces whose governor served as both ruler and commander of the legion stationed in it.⁶⁵ The change led to a breaking off of its dependence—and that of its governor—on the neighboring Provincia Syria.⁶⁶

In view of these facts, it seems to us that one cannot envisage administrative punitive measures against the Jewish population by the Romans. According to Avi-Yonah, with these administrative measures they “were clearly intending to rectify what seemed perverted and defective to the Romans, trying to strengthen the elements that were working for the good of the regime and to weaken those elements that were opposed to it.”⁶⁷

The imposition of the *Fiscus Judaicus* on every Jew in the Empire after the year 70 is the only and exceptional example of collective punishment for the Jews. Safrai was of the opinion that “Above all, taxation was a form of humiliation and repression, and indirectly it was a kind of submission to idolatry.

63 Smallwood, 331–332.

64 Smallwood, 333, and note 4. In the framework of the reorganization of the eastern border, the client states of Lesser Armenia and the Kingdom of Commagene were cancelled in the years 72/73 CE and were annexed to the Roman provinces. On the policy of Vespasian in the East, see Albert Brian, Bosworth, “Vespasian’s Reorganization of the North East Frontier,” *Antichthon* 10 (1976): 63–78.

65 On provinces with only one legion and the purpose behind this arrangement, see Thomasson, B.E. “The One-Legion Provinces of the Roman Empire during the Principate,” *Opuscula Romana* 11 (1973): 61–66. See also Werner Eck, *Senatoren von Vespasian bis Hadrian: Prosopographische Untersuchungen mit Einfluss der Jahres- und Provinzialfasten des Statthalter* (München: Beck, 1970), 6. In his view, there is no reasonable explanation for the motive behind Vespasian’s measures in Judaea.

66 On the interrelations and interdependence between the provinces of Judaea and Syria before the Great Revolt, see Stern, *Authors* 1, 278–279. Safrai claims that there was a continued dependence of *Provincia Judaea* on the governor of Syria after the destruction. See Shmuel Safrai, “The Status of the Provincia Judaea after the destruction of the Second Temple,” *Zion* 27 (1962): 88–93 [in Hebrew]; Safrai, “Recovery of the Yishuv,” 23–24. In opposition to this claim, see Dov Gera, *The Roman Government and Army in Judea: From the Destruction of the Second Temple till the Outbreak of the Bar Kokhba Revolt*, M.A. thesis (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1977), 50–55 [in Hebrew]. On the independence of the governor of Judaea after 70 CE, see also Thomasson (previous note, 63–66; Schürer, 514; Goodblatt, “Jews of Eretz Israel,” 157.

67 Avi-Yonah, *Historical Geography*, 76; Goodblatt, “Jews of Eretz Israel,” 157–158.

At first it was a legal discrimination for the very fact of being someone who belonged to the Jewish people.”⁶⁸

Smallwood, did not ignore the negative implications of the Jewish tax on the Jews of the period, however she argued that its imposition should not be interpreted as an attempt to enforce idol worship on them, but it should be understood as an economic factor as the reasons for the imposing of the Jewish tax.⁶⁹

Although I claimed that the years after 70 CE need not be considered as years of severe crisis and that the immediate changes that the Romans carried out should not be regarded as punitive measures against the rebellious Jews, nevertheless, in view of what Dyson said above, these changes forced the Jews to adapt themselves once again to new realities, and this in itself could have been a dangerous stage in the system of relations between Jews and Romans.

1.2 The Roman Army as a Cause for Unrest in Judaea

In the opinion of researchers, the years 70–132 were characterized by continuous clashes between the Jewish population in the province and the Roman administration and army. The source for such friction was prolonged dissatisfaction and a sense of deprivation felt by the Jewish population: the increasing presence of the Roman army in the province spread throughout Judaea in many bases and camps resulted in stricter supervision over the people. This sense of deprivation led to ceaseless attempts by the Jewish population to be rid of Roman pressure. But not only did these attempts fail to bring relief, they even increased pressure from the Romans, who extended deployment of the army more widely in the province each time. The circle of violence kept expanding until the Jewish population was forced into open rebellion against the Romans in 132 CE. In order to confirm these statements. I shall pose the question of whether it is possible to deduce this tightening of the noose around the Jewish population from the extent, composition, and deployment of the Roman army in Provincia Judaea during the years 70–132 CE. I shall also examine whether evidence can be found in Jewish and non-Jewish sources for the continual unrest due to the increased presence of the Roman army in Judaea, an unrest that was the prologue to the Second Revolt.

68 Safrai, “Recovery of the Yishuv,” 20.

69 Smallwood, 374–375.

1.2.1 *The Roman Army in Judaea in 70–132 CE*

In his *Jewish War* (VII, 5) Josephus noted: “As the local garrison Caesar decided to leave the Tenth Legion, along with some squadrons of cavalry and companies of infantry.” The stationing of the *Legio X Fretensis* led to a change in the status of Provincia Judaea as I noted above; it became a praetorian province with a governor who also served as the commander of the stationed forces. Josephus does not mention the size of the auxiliary forces attached to the legion, nor does he detail the units serving in it.⁷⁰ The first details about the composition of the auxiliary force in Judaea can be derived from a military diploma dated to May 13, 86 CE,⁷¹ in which six units are mentioned: two cavalry units (*alae*): Veterana Gaetulorum, I Thracum Mauretana, and four cohorts (*cohortes*): II Cantabrorum, I Thracum, II Thracum, I Augusta Lusitanorum. Of these six units, there is evidence only for the Veterana Gaetulorum cavalry unit being stationed in Judaea since 70 CE, after being brought there to suppress the Great Revolt.⁷² This document was the source for certain assumptions and estimates. One general assumption is that the list seems to have been only a partial one and did not represent all the auxiliary units stationed in the country. It is reasonable to suppose that the number of auxiliary units in Judaea, at least in the years following the suppression of the Great Revolt, was more than six.⁷³ David Kennedy, for example, suggests that the cavalry unit *VII Phrygum* mentioned in a diploma from 136–137 CE was attached after the suppression of the revolt to the auxiliary forces in the province and that the number *VII* was added to its name because it was the seventh unit of the Roman forces in Judaea.⁷⁴ Another assumption is that the document details only half of the

70 Smallwood, 344; Shatzman, *Confrontation*, 320. Both of them claim that the situation required the presence of a larger force.

71 *CIL*, XVI, 33. I have been informed of two more diplomas dated to the period of the first one on May 13, 86: Werner Eck, A. Pangrel, “Neue Militärdiplome für die Provinzen Syria und Iudaea/Syria Palaestina,” *Scripta Classica Israelica* 24 (2005): 106–108; Werner Eck, “A Second Constitution for the Auxiliary Troops in Judaea in 86 AD,” *Scripta Classica Israelica* 29 (2010): 21–31.

72 *CIL*, v 7007=ILS 2544.

73 Smallwood, 344. Each of the two documents from Syria dated to November 7, 88, mentions various units stationed in Syria. See *CIL*, XVI, 35; *RMD*, no. 3.

74 David Kennedy, “Cohors xx Palmrenorum—An Alternative Explanation of the Numeral,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 53 (1983): 214–216, and note 20; idem, “Ala Phrygum and Ala VII Phrygum,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 118 (1997): 302; See also *RMD* 111, 160.

auxiliary forces. The Legio x Fretensis had twelve auxiliary units attached to it, and the six mentioned in the document belonged to the northern command.⁷⁵

These assumptions are not at all convincing. First, there is no fixed relation between the size and composition of auxiliary forces and the legions stationed in a province.⁷⁶ Second, among the units listed in the diploma, there is not a single one that can be assigned to the northern command in particular, if indeed there had been such a command.⁷⁷ The attempt to divide the military forces in Provincia Judaea into two commands, north and south, is based on another supposition regarding the existence of the *Limes Palestinae* in the Northern Negev at such an early date.⁷⁸ Those who claim the existence of the limes in the south of the country must have it manned by military forces, and this is the source for the claim about the southern command.⁷⁹ But the assumption of the existence of the *Limes Palestinae* has come under rigorous criticism in research both in regard to its period and its function. Israel Shatzman dated the beginning of the limes in Palestine to the third century.⁸⁰ Benjamin Isaac also rejected the early date for the existence of the limes and dated it to the third century and the beginning of the fourth century CE. Furthermore, in his opinion, the main function was administrative and not military.⁸¹ And Peter Fabian, in his research on Avdat, affirmed these

75 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 31. But in "Results," 233 he notes that the units in the diploma belonged specifically to the southern command.

76 Cheesman, 52; Holder, 167; Shatzman, *Confrontation*, 437, note 149; Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 33. In his discussion of the Roman forces stationed in Wales, Applebaum noted that the southern command had 15 auxiliary units at its disposal in 103 CE, while the northern command had 16 auxiliary units in 98 and 105 CE.

77 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 31. However, the difficulties in identifying cohort 11 Thracum do not constitute evidence for northern stationing of the units in the diploma since 86 CE.

78 See A. Alt, "Limes Palestinae," *Palästina-Jahrbuch* 26 (1930): 43–82; Shimeon Applebaum, "The Initial Date of the Limes Palestinae," *Zion* 27(1962): 1–10 [in Hebrew]. On the issue of the Palestinian limes, see Mordechai Gichon, "The Limes Palestinae: A Stocktaking," in *Roman Frontier Studies* 12, 1979, eds. William S. Hanson, Lawrence J.F. Keppie (Oxford: BAR, 1980): 843–864; Benjamin Isaac, "The Meaning of the Term Limes and Limitanei," *Journal of Roman Studies* 78 (1988): 125–147 [=, 345–387].

79 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 31.

80 Shatzman, "Problems of Security," 3–32. See also M. Avi-Yonah, "The Date of the 'Limes Palestinae,'" *Eretz Israel* 5 (1958): 135–137. Yoram Tzafrir, "The Provinces of Eretz Israel: Names Borders and Administration Districts," *Eretz Israel from the Destruction*, 366–367; Yaron Dan, "The Byzantine Administration in Eretz Israel," *ibid.*, 411–412. (all in Hebrew).

81 Isaac Benjamin, *The Limits of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 161–163, 186–187.

claims and reached the conclusion that in the first century, there was no large Roman force stationed in the Negev that created a densely spaced line of forts and fortresses that could be considered the southern limes.⁸² Therefore, the rejection of the *Limes Palestinae* in the first century CE forces us also to reject the claim for a southern command during this period with six auxiliary units at its disposal.

In recent years, additional diplomas have been published that once again raise the question of the auxiliary forces in Judaea after the year 70. One diploma is dated to June 6/11 in the year 87 CE,⁸³ and the other to January/September, 90 CE.⁸⁴ Both of them mention the six units that appear in the diploma of 86 CE. In addition, the first diploma of 87 CE mentions two other cohorts: III Callaecorum Bracaraugustanorum and I Damascenorum Armenica; and the 90 CE diploma mentions the cohort *I Miliaria Sagittariorum* in addition to those other two.

This new information indicates that between the years 86 and 90, at least 9 units were stationed in the province, which closes the case against the assumptions mentioned above regarding the cavalry unit VII Phrygum⁸⁵ and the possibility of two commands in the province.⁸⁶

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- 82 See Peter Fabian, *Avdat during the Establishment of Provincia Arabia: The Roman Military Camp and its Position in the Eastern Defense System of the Empire*, Ph.D. diss. (Beer Sheva: Ben Gurion University of the Negev, 2005) [in Hebrew].
- 83 Werner Eck, Peter Weiss, "Eine Konstitution für die Truppen Iudaeas aus dem Jahr 87," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 170 (2009): 201–206. Two versions of it were published. See also Werner Eck, Andreas Pangerl, "Ein Diplom für die Truppen Judäas aus dem Jahr 87 und die Frage nach der Gleichförmigkeit römischer Militäradministration," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 31 (2012): 53–64.
- 84 Hannah M. Cotton, Werner Eck, Benjamin Isaac, "A Newly Discovered Governor of Judaea in a Military Diploma from 90 CE," *Israel Museum Studies in Archaeology* 2 (2003): 17–31. The diploma was also published in *RMD* V, 33 and *RGZM*, 29.
- 85 *RMD* V, no. 421, 844, note 4. A diploma from the year 157/158 CE in which a cavalry unit is mentioned. Holder notes that the name of this unit also appears in a diploma of 136/137 CE (*RMD* III, no. 160) when it arrived in the province of Syria-Palaestina from Provincia Syria where it was last mentioned in the year 127/136 (*CIL* XVI, 103). See *RMD* I, no. 3, page 33 note 5 in which Roxan notes that the absence of a number for the cavalry unit Phrygum since the year 88 in Syria shows that the reconstruction of the number VI] I is incorrect. This means that these were two separate units. See also *RMD* III, no. 173, note 5.
- 86 Hannah M. Cotton, "The Impact of the Roman Army in the Province of Judaea/Syria Palaestina," in *The Impact of the Roman Army (200 BC–AD 476): Economic, Social, Political, Religious, and Cultural Aspects*, proceedings of the Sixth Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire, Capri, April 2–29, 2005, eds. Lukas De Bois, Elio Lo Cascio (Leiden, Brill, 2007): 393–407. See 395–396.

The question of the size and composition of the Roman army in Provincia Judaea after the year 70 CE should be examined against a totally different background. The tasks and functions of the Roman army in the province during the years 70–132 CE were similar throughout this period. During times of peace and quiet, the army was mainly assigned to ensure the internal security of the province. In fact, this was its main function since the establishment of the province in 6 CE.⁸⁷ In view of this, I should make use of the considerable information available about the Roman army in the province during the years 6–66 CE and compare it, as far as possible, with the military situation in the province during the years 70–132 CE.

Josephus notes in a few places that the composition of the auxiliary forces in Judaea from the year 6 CE and onwards consisted of six units (five cohorts and one cavalry unit), in which three thousand soldiers served, most of whom were recruited from Caesarea and the surrounding area.⁸⁸ These units were based on six units that were originally from the army of Herod.⁸⁹ In the course of the Varus rebellion, these units joined those of the Roman army that had been brought to the country by Varus to suppress the revolt after the death of Herod in 4 BCE.⁹⁰ After some time, with the appointment of Archelaus as Ethnarch, the Herodian units came under Archelaus command. In 6 CE when the Roman province of Judaea was established, this military force was adapted to the standard formation of Roman auxiliary units and then converted into the main component of the local Roman auxiliary forces.⁹¹ From 41 to 44 CE,

87 See Menahem Stern, "The Status of Provincia Judaea and its Governors in the Roman Empire under the Julio-Claudian Dynasty," *Eretz Israel* 10 (1971): 274–282 [in Hebrew]. See also Mark A. Chancey, *Greco Roman Culture and the Galilee of Jesus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), chapter 2, "The Roman Army in Palestine," 43–79.

88 See *JA* XIX, 356–366; *JW* II, 238; *JA* XX, 121, 176; *JW*, III, 66.

89 On Herod's army, see Israel Shatzman, "Herod's Kingdom: Army and Security Problems," *Milet*, Everyman's University Studies in Jewish History and Culture 1 (1983): 75–89 [in Hebrew]. See also Michael H. Gracey, "The Armies of the Judean Client Kings," in *The Defence of the Roman and Byzantine East*, eds. Philip Freeman, David Kennedy (Oxford: BAR, 1986): 311–318. For summary discussions on the army of Herod, see Israel Shatzman, *The Armies of the Hasmonians and Herod* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1991), 170–216; Samuel Rocca, *Herod's Judaea: A Mediterranean State in a Classical World* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 133–147: "The Structure of Herod's Army."

90 *JA* XVII, 266; *JW* II, 52, 58, 63.

91 See Smallwood, 146, where he claims that the army of Herod had already been adapted to the Roman style in its composition and structure. For a contrary opinion, see Schalit Abraham, *König Herodes, Der Mann und sein Werk* (Berlin De Gruyter, 1969; 2nd ed., with a forward by Daniel R. Schwartz, 2001), 167, in which he states that Herod's army was formed according to the style of Hellenistic armies.

it served under the command of Agrippa I;⁹² and after his death, its units continued to serve as an auxiliary force in the province until it was finally disbanded by Vespasian.⁹³ It may be that from time to time other units served in Judaea. Acts 10:1 says, “At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment.” This unit was identified as the cohort *II Italica Civium Romanorum*.⁹⁴ Another unit is mentioned in Acts 27:1: “When it was decided that we would sail for Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Augustan cohort “σπειρης Σεβαστής.” This was the cohort Augusta that was stationed in Caesarea in 60 CE and was involved in the arrest of Paul. It is also the same unit that is mentioned later on as the one that served under Agrippa II.⁹⁵ The total number of soldiers who served permanently in Judaea during the years 6–66 CE was about three thousand. In spite of the limited numbers, this was a sufficient force to supervise the order and internal security in the province until 44 CE.

The death of Agrippa I in 44 CE led to a change in the territorial extent of the province and to the incorporation of the Galilee and Perea within its borders.⁹⁶

92 *JA*, XIX, 364–365.

93 *JA*, XIX, 366. On later evidence of these units outside Judaea, see *CIL* III, 2916 (=9984); VIII. 9358=*ILS* 2738; VIII, 9359; XVI, 35=*ILS* 1436.

94 See Michael P. Speidel, “The Roman Army in Judaea under the Procurators,” *Ancient Society*, 13/14 (1982/83): 233; Wendy Cotter, “Cornelius, the Roman Army and Religion,” in *Religious Rivalries and the Struggle for Success in Caesarea Maritima*, ed. Terence L. Donaldson (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2000): 279–302; See also Chancey (above, note 16), 49. Roth rejects the actual existence of the unit. See Jonathan P. Roth, “Jews and the Roman Army: Perceptive and Realities,” in *The Impact of the Roman Army (200 BC–AD 476): Economic, Social, Political, Religious and Cultural Aspects*, eds. Lukas de Blois, Elio Lo Cascio (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 412.

95 *Année Épigraphique* (1925), no. 21; Speidel (above, note 62), 236. See also Dennis B. Saddington, *The Development of the Roman Auxiliary Forces from Caesar to Vespasian (49 BC–79 AD)* (Harare: University of Zimbabwe, 1982), 101. He adopts the assumption about the cohort Italica, but claims that it is difficult to decide whether the other unit was the cohort Sebaste, one of the Sebastian units that served in Judaea, or whether it was another unit. See also idem, “The Administration and the Army in Judaea in the Early Roman Period (from Pompey to Vespasian, 63 BC–AD 79),” in *The Holy Land in History and Thought; Papers Submitted to the International Conference*, Johannesburg, 1986, ed. Moshe Sharon (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 33–40; Craig S. Kneer, “Acts 10: Were Troops Stationed in Caesarea during Agrippa’s Rule?,” *Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism* 7 (2010): 164–176.

96 See *JA*, XIX, 363; Speidel (above, note 94), 236, claims that after the death of Agrippa I, Judaea was annexed to Syria.

This expansion raised difficulties for the limited auxiliary forces which were no longer capable of maintaining control over the entire area. Nevertheless, the Romans did not increase the strength of the stationary forces but preferred to bring reinforcements from the Roman army in Provincia Syria.⁹⁷ The difficulties were removed in 70 CE with the stationing of Legio X Fretensis in Jerusalem, joining another six auxiliary units, which constituted the forces already stationed in the province. The stationing of Legio X Fretensis does not have to be interpreted as a punitive act by the Romans against the Jewish rebels. From the Roman viewpoint, the permanent stationing of this force was meant to solve the difficulties that had arisen in the province since 44 CE, when its area was doubled and the auxiliary forces could not cope with the added burden. Another support for this assumption is the fact that the local auxiliary force composed of soldiers from Caesarea and Sebaste was disbanded and replaced by auxiliary regiments from western provinces. This change was meant to lessen the tension caused by the execrable relations between the army and the local population. Moreover, of the auxiliary regiments mentioned in the diploma of 86 CE, only one cavalry unit that had taken part in the suppression of the revolt, the *Veterana Gaetulorum*, remained after the destruction in Judaea.⁹⁸ This should be regarded as additional proof that the Romans wanted to turn a new page in the system of relations with the Jewish population in the province.

During the years 90–117, a few changes were made in the composition of the stationary forces in Judaea.⁹⁹ The cohort I Thracum was transferred to Syria, and it is mentioned in the diploma of 88 CE that the title of *Augusta* was added to its name.¹⁰⁰ After some time—in 106 CE—it was attached to the stationary forces in Provincia Arabia, and the title of *Equitata* was added to its name.¹⁰¹

97 See, for example, the help given by Sossius to Herod during his conquest of Jerusalem in *JA*, XIV, 445–486. On the intervention of the Syrian governors in Judaea, see Menahem Stern, “The Status of Provincia Judaea and its Governors in the Roman Empire under the Julio-Claudian Dynasty,” *Eretz Israel* 10 (1971): 274–282 [in Hebrew].

98 On the history of the unit, see Peter Weiss, Michael, P. Speidel, “Das erste Militärdiplom für Arabia,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 150 (2004): 257.

99 On the movements of the units, see Paul Holder, “Auxiliary Deployment in the Reign of Hadrian,” in *Documenting the Roman Army: Essays in Honour of Margaret Roxan*, ed. John J. Wilkes (London: Institute of Classical Studies, 2003): 114, 128, 140.

100 See *RMD*, no. 3. The diploma was published for the first time by Ronald Mellor, “A New Roman Military Diploma,” *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 6/7 (1978/1979): 173–184.

101 For a different reconstruction of cohort movements, see Michael G. Jarrett, “Thracian Units in the Roman Army,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 19 (1969): 214; Margaret Roxan, “Pre-Severan Auxilia Named in the Notitia Dignitatum,” in *Aspects of the Notitia Dignitatum*,

This cohort left evidence of its stationing in Kurnub (= Mamshit) in Arabia during the second century,¹⁰² and it appears to have remained there, according to evidence in Bostra and its surroundings until the fifth century CE.¹⁰³

In 105 CE, two cohorts II Thracum and I Augusta Lusitanorum were transferred from Judaea to Egypt; and to replace them, two units that had gained experience in desert warfare were brought from Egypt: I Hispanorum and I Thebaeorum. These units were stationed in Judaea for only a short while, until they were attached to the stationary forces in Provincia Arabia.¹⁰⁴ Also in 105, the cavalry unit Veterana Gaetulorum, which was also attached to the forces stationed in Arabia, left Judaea.¹⁰⁵ These changes are due to the routine movements of units in the eastern parts of the Empire and should not be regarded as evidence for any kind of unrest among the Jewish population or as the result of friction between the local population and Roman administration in the province.

The death of Agrippa II in 92/93 CE led to another territorial expansion for the province with the annexation of areas that had been under his rule. The annexation of the toparchies of Tiberias, Tarichaea, Abila, and Livias-Julias,¹⁰⁶ forced the Romans to confront problems of security similar to those mentioned above. The size and composition of the stationary forces were insufficient to control the problems of internal security for the expanded province. This deficiency would become obvious in the years 115–117, during the course of the revolt in the Diaspora. The behavior of the Jews in Palestine during those years is a matter of dispute,¹⁰⁷ but the events called *the War of Quietus* indicate

eds., Roger Goodburn, Philip Bartholomew (Oxford: BAR, 1976): 65. On difficulties in identifying units with the name Thracum, see Cotton, Eck, Isaac (above, note 84), 25–26.

102 Abraham Negev, "Oboda, Mampsis and Arabia," *Israel Exploration Journal* 17 (1967): 52–53.

103 For evidence from sites in Arabia, see From Imatan-CIL, 111, 102, 110; From Um al Quttein-AE 1928, no. 3; From Qasr el Hallabat-David L. Kennedy, *Archaeological Exploration on the Roman Frontier in North East Jordan* (Oxford: BAR, 1982): 39–40, no. 3; From Asabiaia-*Notitia Dignitatum*, Or., 37.32.

104 RMD, I, no. 9; Speidel, "The Roman Army," 709–710. See also Hans-Georg Pflaum, "Une Nouvelle Diplome Militaire d'un Soldat de l'Armée d'Egypte," *Syria*, 44 (1967): 339–362; Aryeh Kasher, "Some Comments on the Jewish Uprising in Egypt in the Time of Trajan," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 27 (1976): 151, note 22a: According to Kasher, "It stands to reason that these cohorts returned back to Egypt after fulfilling their mission."

105 Speidel, "The Roman Army," 705–706.

106 Smallwood, 354.

107 See Oppenheimer, "Jewish Community in Galilee," 58–63; Herr, "The Participation of the Galilee," 67–73; Goodblatt, "Jews of Eretz Israel," 181–182; Miriam Pucci Ben Zeev,

unrest particularly in the Galilee areas, the main region in which Roman military supervision was extremely slight.¹⁰⁸

After the suppression of the revolt, the Romans overcame their difficulties by the addition of a legion based in Kefar Otnai (Legio) on the southern borders of the Galilee.¹⁰⁹ In spite of the addition of a second legion to the stationary forces in the province, there is no explicit evidence for the doubling (or even the strengthening) of the auxiliary forces in Judaea after the year 117 CE.¹¹⁰ Attempts to locate these units in the diplomas of 86 and 139 CE¹¹¹ are vain attempts. The units mentioned in the first diploma cannot be located in Judaea in later periods. I noted above that of the six units mentioned, four had already left the province in 88 or 109 CE; of the remaining two, the cavalry unit I Thracum Mauretana is mentioned in the year 134 CE as part of the stationary forces in Egypt,¹¹² and remained there at least until 206 CE.¹¹³ No further details are available about the cohort II Cantabrorum, besides being mentioned in the diplomas of 86, 87,¹¹⁴ and 90 CE.¹¹⁵ In a diploma from Aphek dated to November 22, 139 CE granted to a soldier from the cohort II Ulpia Galatarum, fifteen units are mentioned, three cavalry units and twelve cohorts. There is additional evidence only for the cohort I Millaria Thracum as being

"The Uprising in Trajan Period," *Judaea and Rome*, 85. Idem, *Diaspora Judasim in Turmoil, 116/117 CE; Ancient Sources and Modern Insights*, (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 219–256; idem, "The uprisings in the Jewish diaspora, 116–117," *The Cambridge History of Judaism IV* (2006), 93–104; idem, *La Rivolta Ebraica al Tempo di Traiano* (Pisa: Giardini, 1981).

108 See, for example David Rokeah, "The War of Kitos: Towards the Clarification of a Philological and Historical Problem," *Scripta Hierosolimitana* 23 (1972): 79–84. Rokeah transfers the events to Egypt.

109 See Isaac-Roll, "The Second Legion Traiana," 149–156.

110 Shimeon Applebaum, "Points of View on the Second Jewish Revolt," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 7 (1983/84): 81. Applebaum claims that the forces were doubled.

111 *CIL*, XVI, 33, 87.

112 *CPL*, 118=*BGU*, II, 656.

113 The cavalry unit was stationed in 142 CE in Alexandria. See *AE* 1948, no. 168. For later evidence of its stationing in Egypt in 156 CE, see Robert O. Fink, *Roman Military Records on Papyrus* (Cleveland: American Philological Association, the Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1971), no. 64; in 156/161—*CIL*, XVI, 184; in 179—*RMD* III No. 185; in 199—*ILS* 2543; in 206—*ILS* 4424.

114 See Werner Eck, Peter Weiss, "Eine Konstitution für die Truppen Iudaeas aus dem Jahr 87," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 170(2009): 201–204.

115 Hannah M. Cotton, Werner Eck, B. Isaac, "A Newly Discovered Governor of Judaea in a Military Diploma from 90 CE," *Israel Museum Studies in Archaeology* 2 (2003): 17–31.

stationed in Palestine before the year 139 CE. This unit was placed in Hebron in 124 CE, and its sub unit encamped in Ein Gedi on May 6, 124 CE.¹¹⁶

With regard to the other two units on the list, it was claimed that they were also stationed in Judaea before 139 CE. Smallwood estimated that the cohort IV Bracaraugustanorum was assigned to Judaea between the years 70 and 135 CE.¹¹⁷ Speidel relies on the tiles that were found in Tille on which the inscription '[...]Ac Aug' was engraved and identifies the cohort with the one under discussion, claiming it was stationed in Syria until the year 130 CE.¹¹⁸ However, in an inscription that describes the career of C. Aufidius Maximus, it is mentioned that he served as a prefect of the cohort in Judaea, which means before its name was changed to Syria-Palaestina.¹¹⁹ In view of this evidence, it may be that the unit arrived in Judaea to suppress the revolt.

The supposition of Sherwin-White that the cohort I Damascenorum was attached to the stationary forces in Judaea even before 107 CE¹²⁰ is no longer valid in view of the diplomas that were not at his disposal at the time of writing. In the diplomas dated to the years 86, 87, 90, 136/37, 139, 142, 158, 160, and 186, the cohort appears under the name of *I Damascena Armeniaca*.¹²¹ This evidence undermines the assumption based on testimony from Egypt that the

116 Hayim Polotsky, "The Greek Papyri from the Cave of the Letters," *Israel Exploration Journal* 12 (1962): 259; Naphtaly Lewis, *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters, Greek Papyri* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1989), 41–46 no. 11. See also Micahel P. Speidel, "A Tile Stamp of Choros I Thracum Militaria from Hebron/Palestine," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 35 (1979): 170–172; Smallwood, 448.

117 Smallwood, 448, note 79.

118 Michael P. Speidel, "The Roman Army in Asia Minor: Recent Epigraphical Discoveries and Researches," in *Armies and Frontiers in Roman Byzantine Anatolia*, proceedings of a colloquium held at University College, Swansea, in April 1981, ed. Steven Mitchell (Oxford: BAR, 1983), p. 17. In opposition to Speidel's reading, see James G. Crow, David H. French, "New Research on the Euphrates Frontier in Turkey," in *Roman Frontier Studies* 12, 1979, eds. W.S. Hanson, Lawrence J.F. Keppie (Oxford: 1980): 905.

119 See *ILS*, 5549.

120 Adrian N. Sherwin-White, *The Letters of Pliny* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 425–430; *ILS* 2722. See also David Kennedy, *The Auxilia and Numeri Raised in the Roman Province of Syria*, Unpublished dissertation (Oxford: 1980), 187–189.

121 For 86—Werner Eck, "A Second Constitution for the Auxiliary Troops in Judaea in 86 AD," *Script Classica Israelica*, 29 (2010): 21–31; For 87—Werner Eck, Peter Weiss, above, note 82. For 90—*RMD* V, 332. For 136/137—*RMD* III, 160. For 139—*CIL* XVI 87. For 142—*RGZM* I 29. For 158—Werner Eck and Andreas Pangerl, "Eine Konstitution für die Truppen von Syria Palaestina vom 6 Feb. 158 n. Chr.," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 157 (2006): 185–191. For 160—*RMD* III, 173. For 186—*RMD* I, 69.

unit was still there in 135 CE,¹²² and that it may therefore be supposed that the cohort was brought to Judaea only after 135, after the suppression of the Second Revolt.¹²³ The other units mentioned in the diploma of 139 CE were attached to the stationary forces in Judaea during the course of the revolt and afterwards. Therefore, nothing about the composition of the auxiliary forces in Judaea before the year 132 CE can be learned from the list. An examination of the size and composition of the Roman army in Judaea during the years 70–132 CE proves that it was significantly reinforced only during a time of crisis, when the situation in the province deteriorated to the level of uprisings and rebellions, as in the years 117 and 132.¹²⁴

In all the evidence concerning the Roman forces in the province, there is nothing to prove their reinforcement during times of tranquility. Nor is there proof of any intentions by the Romans to tighten the supervision over the local population because of the Roman estimation that the Jews were in a continuous state of unrest and anti-Roman agitation during that period.

1.2.2 *Deployment of the Roman Army in Provincia Judaea*

The deployment of the Roman army throughout the province during the years 70–132 CE was also interpreted as evidence for the tightening of military pressure around the Jewish population. The available information on this subject for the years before 70 CE is limited. Josephus notes that until 70 CE, an auxiliary force was stationed in Caesarea, the capital of the province,¹²⁵ and that one cohort was permanently stationed in Fort Antonia.¹²⁶ Information about the deployment of the army in Judaea during the years 66–70 CE, the years of the Great Revolt, is far richer. The troops that Vespasian and Titus brought

122 On its stationing in Egypt, see *CIL*, v, 5126; *BGU*, 73. See also Schürer, 548, note 150. In opposition to this interpretation, see James Russell, "A Roman Military Diploma from Rough Cilicia," *Bonner Jahrbücher* 195 (1995): 86–87 note 63.

123 See Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 65, no. 6, who writes that the unit participated in the final actions to suppress the revolt.

124 See Josephus, *JW*, II, 39–79; *JA*, XVII, 250–299, which describe the force that Varus brought with him to Judaea in 4 BCE. Shatzman, *Confrontation*, 301 estimates that the number of soldiers was about thirty thousand. Petronius also brought thirty thousand soldiers in 40 CE during the crisis over installing the statue of Caligula in the Temple. See Josephus, *JW*, II, 186; *JA*, XVIII, 262; Philo, *Legatio ad Gaium*, 207. Cestius Gallus fought in Judaea with forty thousand soldiers. See *JW*, II, 500–502. During the Great Revolt, the Roman army comprised 55,860 soldiers. See *JW*, III, 65–69. For these estimates, see Shatzman, *Confrontation*, 303, 312. See also Saddington (above, note 95), 102–105.

125 *JW*, II, 230; III, 66.

126 *JA*, II, 106–109; *JW*, II, 244; V, 244.

to Judaea were dispersed around the province and served as a garrison stationed temporarily at various locations. According to Josephus, these forces were placed in various areas of the Galilee: in Gush Halab (=Gischala),¹²⁷ in Sepphoris,¹²⁸ and all across Samaria;¹²⁹ on the coastal strip: in Jaffa,¹³⁰ Ashdod, and Jamnia;¹³¹ and in Judaea: in Bethel, Ophraim,¹³² and Gophna.¹³³ A unit under the command of Aebutius was encamped in the Valley of Jezreel,¹³⁴ and Neopolitanus commanded a cavalry unit that protected Beth Shean (=Scythopolis).¹³⁵

A unit composed of cavalry and infantry under the command of Antonius was stationed in Ashkelon,¹³⁶ and veteran horsemen from Gaba Hippeum performed security tasks in their area of settlement.¹³⁷ Josephus also noted that in the winter of 67/68 Vespasian stationed forces in the villages and small cities he conquered, with decurions in command of the villages and centurions in command of the small cities.¹³⁸ Camps were set up in Jericho and Hadid where Vespasian stationed troops composed of Romans and auxiliary forces.¹³⁹ To this list are added a few fortresses in the south (e.g., Tel Beersheba, Tell Malatha, and Masada) in which military units were stationed during the period when the revolt was being suppressed.¹⁴⁰

The evidence I reviewed above represents the deployment of the Roman army during times of crisis, when a large number of military forces were brought as reinforcements for the local stationary troops in Judaea. Their main function was to suppress the Jewish uprising and supervise the areas captured from the rebels. However, nothing can be derived from this evidence regarding periods of calm, when the Roman army in the province was smaller and its functions were completely different. The deployment of the Roman army and its military activities in Provincia Judaea during the years 70–132 CE have

¹²⁷ *JW*, IV, 120.

¹²⁸ *JW*, III, 31–34.

¹²⁹ *JW*, IV, 442.

¹³⁰ *JW*, III, 429–430.

¹³¹ *JW*, III, 4.

¹³² *JW*, IV, 551.

¹³³ *JW*, V, 50.

¹³⁴ Josephus, *Life*, 114.

¹³⁵ Josephus, *Life*, 120–121.

¹³⁶ *JW*, III, 12.

¹³⁷ Josephus, *Life*, 115.

¹³⁸ *JW*, IV, 442.

¹³⁹ *JW*, IV, 486.

¹⁴⁰ Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 31.

been reviewed in the light of literary evidence and archaeological finds from all kinds of sites. The main conclusion of this review was that a Roman auxiliary force in Judaea was stationed in permanent forts scattered throughout the province.¹⁴¹ An examination of the literary evidence and the archaeological finds that led to this conclusion raises a number of difficulties and questions because the evidence from Tiberias, Sycaminum (Shikmona), and Azzun are dated later than the period under discussion. The source in the Jerusalem Talmud that mentions the existence of a *castra* (guard post) in Tiberias is of the third century, and the other pieces of evidence from Tiberias also are not dated before the time of Hadrian.¹⁴²

The establishment of the fort in Shikmona is dated to the period after the Bar Kokhba revolt and within the framework of the reorganization of the province.¹⁴³ The burial inscription of the veteran Antoninus Alexandros of Azzun is dated to the end of the second and beginning of the third century.¹⁴⁴ The evidence from Jericho is concerned with civilian findings, and the researchers were doubtful whether to date its destruction to the time of Vespasian or of Hadrian, but this has no connection with my discussion.¹⁴⁵ The Roman fort that was identified in Nahal Eitan in the Golan Heights is outside the geographical range of the problem under discussion.¹⁴⁶ The sources that were used to prove the existence of a permanent Roman camp in Sepphoris are not convincing, and recently Miller rejected them as evidence for the existence of a camp.¹⁴⁷ The stamp impressions of *Legio x Fretensis* on

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 29. On the inscription of the centurion of Legion VI Ferrata from Tiberias, see Michael Avi-Yonah, "Newly Discovered Latin and Greek Inscriptions," *Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine* 12 (1946): 91, note 7. See also Moshe Schwabe, I. Guttman, "History of Tiberias: An Epigraphic Study," Moshe Schwabe, I. Guttman, eds., *Yohanan Levy Volume: Studies in Hellenistic Jewry*, (Jerusalem, 1949), p. 230, note 19.

¹⁴³ See *Hadashot Arkheologiyot* 17 (1966): 19–20.

¹⁴⁴ On the inscription, see Robert J. Bull, "A Roman Veteran's Epitaph from Azzun," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 98 (1966): 163–165. Applebaum dates the inscription to the 3rd century. See Shimeon Applebaum, Benjamin Isaac, Yohanan Landau, "Varia Epigraphica," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 4 (1978): 142, n. 16.

¹⁴⁵ Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 30, and note 262, which refers to the report of James L. Kelso, Dimitri. C. Baramki, *Excavations at New Testament Jericho Khirbrt en-Nitla* (New Haven: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1955). 8.

¹⁴⁶ On the finding in Nahal Eitan, see *Hadashot Arkheologiyot* 54–55 (1975): 2.

¹⁴⁷ Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 28–29. See Stuart S. Miller, *Studies in the History and Traditions of Sepphoris*, (Leiden 1984), 33–45.



FIGURE 1.1 A Roof Tile of Legio VI Ferrata from Legio.
PHOTO BY OR FIALKOVIT.

a brick in Jaffa,¹⁴⁸ an inscription of *Legio VI Ferrata* found among the ruins of Hazon in the Galilee,¹⁴⁹ and the shards of roof tiles bearing the seal marks of Legio VI Ferrata in Kefar Hananiah,¹⁵⁰ are occasional and accidental finds that cannot serve as evidence for the existence of permanent camps in those sites.

Most of the evidence of the Roman army in Judaea after the year 70 CE is from the two Roman centers in the province, Jerusalem and Caesarea. From the year 70 CE, Jerusalem served as the permanent base for Legio x Fretensis.

148 See *Hadashot Arkheologiyot* 2 (1962): 10; Jacob Kaplan, "The Fifth Season of Excavations at Jaffa," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 54 (1963): 113.

149 See *Hadashot Arkheologiyot* 30 (1969): 11; Dan Bahat, "A Roof Tile of the Legio VI Ferrata and Pottery Vessels from Horvat Hazon," *Israel Exploration Journal* 24 (1974): 160–169.

150 David Adan-Bayewitz, "Kefar Hananya," *New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, eds. Ephraim Stern, Ayelet Levinzon-Gilbo'a (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society & Carta; New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008): 1909–1911.



FIGURE 1.2 *Inscription of the Eighth Cohort of Legio x Fretensis in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.*

PHOTO BY YOAV DOTHAN.



FIGURE 1.3 *Inscription of Legio x Fretensis from the High-Level Aqueduct of Caesarea.*



FIGURE 1.4 *Funerary Inscription of Tiberius Claudius Fatalis, an Officer in Legio x Fretensis.*

PHOTO BY OR FIALKOV.

Evidence for the existence of the legion in the city and its environs is rich and varied, such as the tomb inscription that describes the life of Tiberius Claudius Fatalis, an officer of the legion.¹⁵¹

In this inscription, the commander of the legion, Lucius Flavius Silva, is mentioned.¹⁵² Other evidence indicating a strong military presence in Jerusalem and its environs: inscriptions that testify to the building activities of

151 M. Avi-Yonah, "Greek Inscriptions from Jerusalem and Beisan," *Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine* 13 (1939): 54.

152 Benjamin Mazar, "Excavations near the Temple Mount," *Qadmoniot* 5 (1973), 83–84. See also Mordechai Gichon, Benjamin Isaac, "A Flavian Inscription from Jerusalem," *Israel Exploration Journal* 24 (1974): 117–123 [= 76–86]. Against the identity of the legion commander in the inscription for Lucius Flavius Silva, see Ronald Syme, "Antonius Saturninus," *Journal of Roman Studies* 68 (1978): 12–21.

the legion in the city and surrounding areas¹⁵³ and seals of the legion on roof tiles from all the periods that it was stationed in the city.¹⁵⁴

In Caesarea, the capital of the province and the seat of the governor, there is also evidence of the presence of the Tenth Legion Fretensis on the aqueduct that legion units most probably were engaged in constructing or repairing.¹⁵⁵ There were also countermarks of the legion on the city coins, which indicate the stationing of this legion in Caesarea.¹⁵⁶ The presence of other units in

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- 153 H. Vincent, "Inscription Romaine d' Abou-Goch," *Revue Biblique* 35 (1925): 580–581. Hillel Geva, "Excavations in the Jerusalem Citadel 1979–1982," *Qadmoniot* 10 (1982): 72; idem, "Excavations in the Citadel of Jerusalem, 1979–1980: preliminary report," *Israel Exploration Journal* 33 (1983): 55–71; idem, "The Camp of the Tenth Legion in Jerusalem: An Archaeological Reconsideration," *Israel Exploration Journal* 34 (1984): 239–254; idem, "Twenty-five Years of Excavations in Jerusalem, 1967–1992: Achievements and Evaluation," in *Ancient Jerusalem Revealed*, ed. Hillel Geva, (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1994): 1–28; Eilat Mazar, "The Camp of the Tenth Roman Legion at the Foot of the South-West Corner of the Temple Mount Enclosure Wall in Jerusalem," *New Studies on Jerusalem* 5 (2000): 52–67; idem, "A Roman-Byzantine Bathhouse at the Foot of the Western Wall of the Temple Mount Compound," *New Studies on Jerusalem* 6 (2001): 87–102; Aharon Abramovich, *Camp of the Tenth Legion (Legio x Fretensis) in Jerusalem and the Workshop (Fabrica) of the Legion in the Compound of the Convention Center (Binyanei Ha'ooma) in Jerusalem*, M.A. Thesis, University of Haifa (Haifa: 2006) [in Hebrew]; idem, *The Building Activities of the Legions in the Land of Israel in the First to the Fourth Centuries CE*, diss. (Haifa: University of Haifa, 2011) [in Hebrew].
- 154 For a summary of the legion seal marks found on the bricks, see Dan Barag, "Brick Stamp-Inscriptions of the Legio x Fretensis," *Eretz Israel* 8 (1967) [E.L. Sukenik Memorial Volume]: 168–182 [in Hebrew].
- 155 On the Aqueduct of Caesarea Maritima, see Yaakov Olami, Y. Peleg, "The Aqueduct of Caesarea," *Qadmoniot* 8 (1975): 83–86; Israel L. Levine, *Roman Caesarea: An Archaeological-Topographical Study* (Jerusalem: Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1975): 30–36; for the inscriptions, see Joseph Ringel, *Césarée de Palestine: Étude Historique et Archéologique* (Paris: Éditions Ophrys, 1975), 66–71. Lehmann-Holum, 71–77; *CIIP*, II, Building inscriptions: Nos. 1200–1209, 132–142. (No. 1201 Legio XXII Deiotariana; No. 1202 Legio II Traiana; Nos. 1203, 1205, 1206, 1207, 1208 Legio x Fretensis; Nos. 1204, 1209 Legio VI Ferrata). For a summary of the inscription in Caesarea, see Joseph Ringel, *Césarée de Palestine: Étude Historique et Archéologique* (Paris: Éditions Ophrys, 1975), 66–71; Lehmann-Holum, 71–72, no. 45; Jacob Olami, Joseph Ringel, "New Inscriptions of the Tenth Legion Fretensis from the High Level Aqueduct of Caesarea," *International Journal (Toronto)* 25 (1975): 148–150.
- 156 For countermarks of the Tenth Legion on the coins of Caesarea, see Leo Kadman, *The Coins of Caesarea Maritima* (Jerusalem: Schocken, 1957), II, 79–82. See also Dan Barag, "The Countermarks of the Legio Decima Fretensis," in *Patterns of Monetary Development*



FIGURE 1.5 *Inscription of Legio VI Ferrata from the High-Level Aqueduct in Caesarea.*
PHOTO BY OR FIALKOV.

Caesarea can be clearly seen from the inscriptions on the aqueduct, including those of Legio VI Ferrata¹⁵⁷ and Legio II Traiana.¹⁵⁸ Legio also served as a military center after the attachment of a second legion to the stationary forces in Judaea that established its base camp at that place.¹⁵⁹

In addition to the three central locations mentioned above, we may learn from other sites about the existence of permanent Roman military encampments set up at strategic points in the province. In the southeast, on the western slope of Masada, the Romans set up Camp F2, which was in use during the years 73–111.¹⁶⁰ The camp was meant to insure against the reconquest of

in *Phoenicia and Palestine in Antiquity*, ed. Arie Kindler (Tel Aviv: Schocken, 1967): 117–125; Gregory G. Brunk, “A Hoard from Syria Countermarked by the Roman Legions,” *American Numismtical Society. Musum Notes* 25 (1980): 63–73.

157 Lehmann-Holum, 74 No. 49; 77 No. 54.

158 Lehmann-Holum, 73 No. 47.

159 See above, note 109.

160 *JW*, VII, 407. See Yigael Yadin, “Masada and the Limes,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 17 (1967): 43–45. On the force that was stationed at that place, see I.A. Richmond, “The Roman Siege Works of Masada Israel,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 52 (1962): 152–153.

Masada by the Jews.¹⁶¹ In this region, in Ein Gedi, a papyrus document dated to the year 124 CE affirms that the Romans established a military camp in the very heart of the Jewish population. At the time, a subunit of the cohort *1 Milliaria Thracum* was stationed in that place, but unfortunately it is not possible to determine when it was first placed there.¹⁶²

In the northeast, in Tel Shalem, about 11 km south of Scythopolis, excavation findings included an inscription of Legio VI Ferrata; a bronze statue of Hadrian; a monumental inscription from the time of Hadrian; and the ruins of a military camp. These finds indicate the presence of a permanent Roman camp in that location. The camp's main task was to keep control over the cross-roads in the region.¹⁶³ Information from archaeological, numismatic, and epigraphic finds indicates the name of a soldier or a military unit. But this type of evidence is random and cannot assist in resolving our concerns. At the most, it places a soldier or unit at the location of the find; but one cannot deduce from this evidence the size of the military presence there, its period and functions, or—more especially—whether it constituted a permanent military base at that location.

Evidence of this kind concerning Legio X Fretensis was found throughout the province. In Ashkelon, a dedicatory inscription by the city in honor of the centurion of the legion, Aulus Instuleius Tenax, was discovered.¹⁶⁴ Coins of the city were also found there with the countermarks of the legion.¹⁶⁵ Similar coins

161 Shatzman, "Problems of Security," 30.

162 Jacob Polotsky, "The Greek Inscriptions from the Cave of Documents," *Caves of the Judaean Desert: An Archaeological Review*, 11, (Jerusalem: 1962), p. 239. See also Michael P. Speidel, "A Tile Stamp of Cohors I Thracum Milliaria from Hebron/Palestine," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 35 (1979): 170–172; Smallwood, 437. In her opinion, the stationing of the unit in Ein Gedi was connected with the Diaspora Revolt. In opposition to her view, see J.C. Mann, "A Note on an Inscription from Kurnub," *Israel Exploration Journal* 19 (1969): 212–213.

163 On the inscription, see Nehemiah Tzori, "An Inscription of the Legio VI Ferrata from the Northern Jordan Valley," *Israel Exploration Journal* 21 (1971): 53–54. On the bronze statue of Hadrian, see Gideon Foerster, "A Bronze Statue of Hadrian Dressed in Armor," *Qadmoniot* 8 (1985): 38–40. See also Gideon Foerster, "A Cuirassed Bronze Statue of Hadrian," *Atiqot* 17 (1985): 139–157. On the inscription from the time of Hadrian, see *Hadashot Arkheologiyot*, 41–42 (April 1976): 17; Gideon Foerster, "The Galilee on the Eve of the Bar Kokhba Revolt," *Cathedra* 4 (1977): 78. On the remains of the Roman camp, see *Hadashot Arkheologiyot* 57–58 (April 1976): 17–18; 65–66 (April 1978): 9. Below I will discuss in detail the findings from Tel Shalem, see 173–190.

164 See David G. Hogarth, "Greek Inscriptions from Askalon," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* (1922): 22–23. See also the discussion of Lifshitz, *Roman Legions*, 66.

165 Hill, 113, no. 56; Rosenberger, *City Coins*, 81, No. 23.

were also discovered in Sebaste¹⁶⁶ and Gadara,¹⁶⁷ where a dedicatory inscription was also found in honor of the soldiers of the First Infantry Regiment of the legion.¹⁶⁸ Evidence of the same kind was also found for Legio VI Ferrata: for example, the undated inscription of Pompeius Catullius, a centurion of this legion, which was found in Tiberias;¹⁶⁹ an inscription from Samaria;¹⁷⁰ and another one from Beth Gubrin.¹⁷¹

The random nature of this type of find is exemplified by two coins that were found in Tyre and Sidon on which there were countermarks of Legio X Fretensis.¹⁷² In my opinion, the evidence given above that reflects the deployment of the Roman army during the years 70–132 CE indicates that the Romans refrained from stationing units in many permanent camps throughout the province of Judaea. Roman stationary forces were encamped in two permanent bases of the two legions, one in Jerusalem and the other in Kefar Otnai. There is no doubt that units of these two legions were also stationed in Caesarea, the capital of the province. In addition, two camps were set up at two strategic points: in the southeast—at Masada and later on in Hebron and at Ein Gedi—and in the northeast, in the area of Beth Shean. From the other evidence that I detailed previously, it appears that the so-called *Roman stationary forces* were actually mobile. The Romans preferred to activate the local army from its permanent base for different tasks in various locations throughout the province according to immediate need. During calmer times, when the stationary force was not very large, the Romans preferred to concentrate their forces in a limited number of permanent camps from which their units were sent out. Therefore, even with regard to the issue of deployment of the Roman army, there is no indication that it tightened the pressure around its Jewish subjects.

166 Hill, 78, no. 1–4.

167 Kindler, *Bar Kokhba Coinage*, 76.

168 *CIL*, III, 13589 = 14155(14).

169 Michael Avi-Yonah, "Newly Discovered Latin and Greek Inscription," *Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine* 12 (1946): 21, no. 7. See also Leah Di Segni, "Tiberias Inscriptions," in *Tiberias: From its Founding to the Muslim Conquest*, ed. Yizhar Hirschfeld (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 1988), 80.

170 George Reisner, C. Fisher, D. Lyon, *Harvard Excavations of Samaria 1908–10*, (Cambridge Mass, 1924), p. 251, no. 1, Pl 59. See also *CIL*, III, 135892.

171 John H. Iliffe, "Greek and Latin Inscriptions in the Museum," *Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine* 2 (1933): 121, no. 2; (= *Année Épigraphique* 1933, 158). Saxer, *Epigraphische Studien* 2, no. 292.

172 H. Heymann, "Roman Legionary Coins from Phoenicia," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 1(1963): 47–51. See also Arie Kindler, *Coins of Bar Kokhba*, 76, where he notes that the Tenth Legion Fretensis made countermarks on the coins of various cities.

1.3 Unrest in Provincia Judaea, 70–132 CE

According to researchers, the evidence for the friction between Romans and the Jewish population during the period between the two revolts, from 70 to 132 CE are of two kinds: The first is the various literary and archaeological sources that have been interpreted as proof for Roman military activities against the rebellious Jewish population. The second is the rabbinical sources that allegedly describe the continuous unrest and series of hostile acts against the Roman government in the province. An examination of these sources will enable us to clarify whether the years between the two revolts were indeed years of continuous Roman hostility accompanied by actual military activities and whether the Jewish population during this period was really in ferment and rebellious enough to give cause for harsh Roman reaction.

Literary and Archaeological Sources

The reign of Domitian (79–96) was a difficult one from the viewpoint of his Jewish subjects throughout the Empire in general and for the Jews of Rome in particular.¹⁷³ From the sources that describe the relations between Domitian and the Jews of Rome, a portrayal of the emperor as malevolent toward the Jews emerges: the increased supervision over the levy of the *Fiscus Judaicus*¹⁷⁴ and the persecution of Judaizers.¹⁷⁵ The hostility of the emperor towards the Jews and Judaizers in Rome also provided a basis for attempts to regard various disturbances in Provincia Judaea as clashes between the emperor and the Jewish population in the province. Some of the incidents in Judaea during the period of Domitian were indeed interpreted as evidence for the unrest in Palestine resulting from the hostile attitude of the emperor towards the Jewish population:

¹⁷³ For a summary of research on this issue, see Paul Keresztes, "The Imperial Roman Government and the Christian Church I. From Nero to the Severi," *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* II, 23/1 (1979): 257–272.

¹⁷⁴ Suetonius, *Domitian*, 12; Cassius Dio, 66, 7. For references to the subject of the *Fiscus Judaicus*, see above, 28, note 57.

¹⁷⁵ Cassius Dio, 67, 14: 1–3; Stern, *Authors*, II, 375–384, note 435. See Keresztes (above, note 1), 264–269. See also Margaret H. Williams, "Domitian, the Jews and the 'Judaizers': A Simple Matter of Cupiditas and Maiestas?," *Historia* 39 (1990): 196–211; Lampe, Peter, *From Paul to Valentinus: Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries*. Trans. Michael Steinhauser, ed. Marshall D. Johnson (Minneapolis: Fortress Press 2003), Ch. 20, "T. Flavius Clemens and Flavia Domitilla," 198–205. In spite of the attempts to identify Flavius Clemens and his wife Flavia Domitilla as Christians, I prefer to regard them as Judaizers.

1. Eusebius, in the name of Josephus, cites a number of traditions that described the persecution of descendants of the royal Davidic dynasty by Domitian. According to one tradition, the grandsons of Jesus' brothers were brought before the emperor, who interrogated them but did not order their execution, even though they admitted their Davidic descent.¹⁷⁶ The interrogation of members of Jesus' family was interpreted as evidence for messianic agitation in Judaea.¹⁷⁷
2. The coins of Domitian of 85 CE, with the inscription *Judaea Capta* on them¹⁷⁸ were interpreted as evidence of military activities in the region, and the circumstances of their minting were ascribed to the military successes of the Romans close to the time they were minted.¹⁷⁹
3. In 86 CE the soldiers of Legio I Augusta Lusitanorum were not released from their army service, even though they had been granted Roman citizenship and other benefits.¹⁸⁰ Their nondischarge was explained by the fact that they were needed in the province and viewed as proof of the unrest that prevailed there.¹⁸¹
4. The disturbances associated with the death of Agrippa II in 92/93 CE were perceived as indirect evidence for unrest throughout the province that forced the Roman authorities to employ various means to suppress it:
 - a. The poem of Statius dedicated to M. Maccius Cellar, was dated to the year 92 CE and was presumed to be an indication of military activity in Palestine.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁶ Eusebius, *HE*, III, 19: 4.

¹⁷⁷ Jacob Liver, *The House of David from the Fall of the Kingdom of Judah to the Fall of the Second Commonwealth and After* (Jerusalem: 1959), 35–37 [in Hebrew]. See also John Painter, *Just James: The Brother of Jesus in History and Tradition*, 2nd ed., (Columbia S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 2004), 147–149.

¹⁷⁸ Hill, nos. 31–56; Meshorer, *Coinage of the Jews*, 134–135, nos. 239–246; Reifenberg, *Areih. Ancient Jewish Coins*, 4th ed. (Jerusalem: R. Mass, 1965), 152–162.

¹⁷⁹ Yeivin, 40. See also Jean Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'Empire Romain Leur Condition Juridique Économique et Sociale* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1914), II, p. 185, note 1; David Hendin, "Echoes of *Judaea Capta*: The Nature of Domitian's Coinage of Judea and Vicinity," *Israel Numismatic Research* 2 (2007): 123–130.

¹⁸⁰ Juster, 44; Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 17.

¹⁸¹ Schürer, II, 5, note 12; Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 77, note 85. See also Brian William Jones, "Domitian Advance into Germany and Moisea," *Latomus* 61 (1982): 330–331.

¹⁸² Liebmann-Frankfort, Thérèse "Le Royaume d'Agrippa II et son Annexion: par Domitien." in *Hommages à Albert Grenier*, ed. Marcel Renard (Bruxelles: Latomus, Revue d'Études Latines, 1962): 666.

- b. An edict of Domitian in 93 CE from Egypt granted various rights to veterans, including soldiers of the Tenth Legion Fretensis,¹⁸³ because, in the view of researchers, of the disturbances that occurred in Palestine after the death of Agrippa II.¹⁸⁴
- c. Coins of Domitian of 93 CE were minted, according to Smallwood, after the military achievements of the Romans in Judaea.¹⁸⁵
- d. Epictetus notes in his strictures against the tyrannical rule of Domitian, that the Galileans were examples of those who were not afraid of a despotic ruler and even dared to rebel against him.¹⁸⁶

However, the evidence detailed previously clearly does not constitute definite evidence of unrest in Judaea during the reign of Domitian or proof of the attempts by the emperor to subdue riots and uprisings in Judaea. The testimony of Eusebius regarding the persecution of descendants of the House of David is shadowed by doubt because of the origin of these traditions and their legendary basis.¹⁸⁷ The 'Judaea Capta' coins of 85 do not belong to the Judaea Capta series, and therefore one cannot attribute the motive for their mintage to military events or to the suppression of military uprisings in Judaea in 85 CE.¹⁸⁸ The nondischarge of the soldiers in Legio I Augusta Lusitanorum is not connected to the unrest in Judaea, but rather (as Alon suggested) to the unrest on the Parthian border.¹⁸⁹ This supposition is confirmed by military diplomas from Syria in 88 CE, which testify to the concentration of large military forces in Provincia Syria.¹⁹⁰

The date of death for Agrippa II is controversial: some set it in the year 95/96 CE¹⁹¹ and some of the evidence that attributes it to 92/93 CE is not exempt

183 ILS 9059 = *CIL*, XVI, A No 12; *CPL*, 104.

184 Schürer, 516.

185 On the coins, see Hill, nos. 280–281; Smallwood, 354, note 87.

186 See Arrian, *Diss.* 4, 7, Epictetus, *The Discourses*, IV, 7.

187 Liver, above, note 5.

188 See M. Weissbram, "Domitian Coinage Minted in Palestine—Do they Belong to the Judaea Capta Series?" *Numismatic News in Eretz Israel*, 1 (1962): 5–7; Meshorer, *Coinage of the Jews*, 74, nos. 134–135; idem, *Ancient Jewish Coinage*, vol. II, 197.

189 Alon, *Jews in their Land*, 85.

190 On the diplomas from Syria, see *CIL* XVI, 33; *RMD*, no. 3.

191 Dan Barag, "The 'Judaea Capta' Coinage in Eretz-Israel and its Implications for the Absolute Chronology of the Reign of Agrippa II," *Cathedra* 8 (1978): 48–58 [in Hebrew]. Barag's view is that King Agrippa II was still alive in 95/96 CE and that he probably died or was deposed after the murder of Domitian in September 96. Barag also allows that he may have died in the third year of Trajan, in 100 CE, according to the testimony of

from criticism. The assertion of Smallwood regarding the coinage of 93 CE is without support, and the benefits given to the veterans of the Tenth Legion Fretensis in that year cannot be connected with their part in some presumed suppression of an uprising during that year. Even adopting the view of researchers who date the death of Agrippa II—on the basis of numismatic and epigraphic evidence—to the year 92/93 CE,¹⁹² does not necessitate linking those events to unrest caused by his death. The rest of the evidence associated with the period of his death also gives no indication of any unusual events in Palestine. The poem of Statius was written before Maccius Celler departed for Syria, where he was sent by Domitian. Statius wishes him a safe sailing, and there is no hint of any special occurrence in Judaea.¹⁹³ The words of Epictetus, which mention the Galileans and their behavior, are not convincing evidence of disturbances and unrest in the Galilee since there is no certainty that the reference was to Jewish rebels. Perhaps his words were intended against Christians or Jewish Christians.¹⁹⁴ The antagonistic relations between Domitian and the Jews of Rome were so severe that Applebaum linked the Jews with the assassination of the emperor and perhaps even with Jewish involvement in it.¹⁹⁵ This relationship between Domitian and the Jews of Rome was used as a basis

Photius. See Photius, *Bibliotheca*, Cod, 33, 11, 31–32. See also Dan Barag, “Studies on the Coinage of Agrippa II,” *Israel Numismatic Journal* (1981): 27–32; Nikos Kokkinos, “Justus, Josephus, Agrippa II and his Coins,” *Scripta Clasica Israelica* 22 (2003): 163–180. He posits that Agrippa did not die until 98 CE.

- 192 For the numismatic evidence, see Ya'akov Meshorer, “The Problems of Numbering the Agrippa II's Coins,” *Cathedra* 8 (1978): 59–62 [in Hebrew]. For the epigraphic data, see Uriel Rappaport, “The Historian's Point of View,” *Cathedra* 8 (1978): 64–65 [in Hebrew]. On the inscriptions, see Maurice Dunand, *Mission archéologique au Djebel Druze. Le Musée de Soueïda*, (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1934), p. 43, no. 75; Henry Seyrig, *Syria* (1965): 31–34.
- 193 Smallwood, 354–355; Stern, *Authors*, 1, 517–518, no. 234. See also Stephen Thomas Newmyer, *The Silvae of Statius, Structure and the Theme* (Leiden: Brill, 1979), p. 36; Alex Hardie, *Statius and the Silvae: Poets Patrons and Epideixis in the Graeco-Roman World* (Liverpool: F. Cairns, 1983), 54–156.
- 194 On the doubts that the ‘Galileans’ are Jewish rebels, see Stern, *Authors*, 1, 541, n. 1. Hengel, on the other hand, believes that the reference is to Jews, since the term *Galileans* in referring to Christians began only during the time of Julian the Apostate. See Martin Hengel, *Die Zeloten* (Leiden/Koeln: Brill 1976). On the identification of Galileans as Christians, see William Abbott Oldfather, *Epictetus: the Discourses*, as reported by Arrian: the manual and fragments with an English translation by William Abbott Oldfather (London: W. Heinemann 1928), vol. 11, 361–363. But Sean Freyne identifies the Galileans with Jewish Christians. See Sean Freyne, “The Galileans in the Light of Josephus Vita,” *New Testament Studies* 26 (1980): 398, note 1.
- 195 Shimeon Applebaum, “Domitian's Assassination: The Jewish Aspect,” *Scripta Clasica Israelica* 1 (1974): 116–123. See also Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 2 where he regards the

for the transferring of the constant tension presumed to exist between the Jews of Palestine and the emperor and for including this as part of his enmity towards Jews in general.¹⁹⁶ However there is no evidence from the days of Domitian of continuous unrest or frictions between the Romans and the Jewish population of the province. Furthermore, Goodblatt proposed that the beginning of the recognized Palestinian Patriarchate happened during the reign of Domitian when Rabban Gamaliel was appointed as the head of the Jewish community of the province as an answer to the leadership of the turmoiled province. The Romans needed intermediaries who would fill the role of leader of the nation.¹⁹⁷

However, Goodblatt's dating was rejected by many scholars who study the Jewish Patriarchs. Martin Jacobs challenged Goodblatt and others on the dating and on understanding of the institution of the Jewish Patriarch. According to Jacobs, the Jewish Patriarch was part of a relatively small scholarly elite and gained his reputation through his scholarly achievements; he was not the head of a monolithic religious-political hierarchy representing the Jewish people in general. Goodblatt, therefore, rejected the existence of a patriarchate before the year 70 CE, and according to him, the existence of a Jewish Patriarch before Judah the Patriarch at the turn of the second century CE cannot be proven.¹⁹⁸ Recently Junghwa Choi reviewed the Jewish leadership between 70 CE and 135 CE. Though he also rejected Goodblatt's suppositions about the appointment of R. Gamliel II by the Romans as an intermediary, he added that "Goodblatt's argument on the necessity of Roman intervention is undoubtedly correct."¹⁹⁹ Goodblatt continued to defend his suggestion for a Roman appointment of R. Gamliel II "to a position that developed into the Palestinian patriarchate, a position that involved serving as an intermediary between the Judeans and the Roman overlords and playing a role in Judean self-government."²⁰⁰ But, as previously elucidated, there is no inference from

Judaizing phenomenon among the senatorial ranks in Rome as a protest movement against the terror regime of Domitian.

196 See Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 84–85; Stern, "Roman Government," 11.

197 Goodblatt, "Palestinian Patriarchate," 98. See also his discussion in "Jews of Eretz Israel," 175–178; idem, *Monarchic Principle*, 219–220.

198 Martin Jacobs, *Die Institution des Jüdischen Patriarchen: Eine Quellen-und Traditionskritische Studie zur Geschichte der Juden in der Spätantike* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1995).

199 Junghwa, *Jewish Leadership in Roman Palestine from 70 CE to 135/CE*. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 200–211, see especially, 206.

200 David Goodblatt, "Patriarchs, Romans and (Modern) Scholars: A Response to Seth Schwartz," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 51 (2000): 313–318. An answer to Seth Schwartz' review appears in *Journal of Jewish Studies* 47(1996): 167–169 and his "The Patriarchs and the

any evidence derived from the reign of Domitian that this period was characterized by continuous disturbances or ceaseless friction between the Roman government and its Jewish subjects in the province. Therefore, Goodblatt's claim cannot be reconciled with the assertion that the period of Domitian was marked by unrest in the province. Is it possible that in a period of continuous disturbances, the emperor would have discontinued the military regime and appointed a local leader—and the very son of one who had been a leader of the rebels during the Great Revolt—as the head of the Jewish community in Palestine?²⁰¹

The establishment of Provincia Arabia, the elimination of the Nabataean kingdom in 106 CE, and its annexation to the system of Roman provinces was carried out mainly for security and economic reasons.²⁰² But this matter was also connected with the Jewish population in Judaea and its hostile attitude toward the Roman government:

1. In addition to the aims I mentioned regarding the establishment of Provincia Arabia, Applebaum claimed that by setting up the new province, the Romans aimed to detach and isolate Provincia Judaea “which still shows signs of unrest and rebellion,” and thus prevent the creation of ties

Diaspora,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 50 (1999): 208–222. The issue of the Jewish patriarchs is central in the Mishnaic and Talmudic Periods. Nonetheless, I cannot enlarge on it in my book.

- 201 Shmuel Safrai, “The Visit of the Jabneh Sages in Rome,” in *Scritti in memoria di Umberto Nahon: Saggi sull'Ebraismo Italiano*, eds. Roberto Bonfil et al. (Jerusalem: Institute Shelomoh Me’ir, Institute Refa’el Kāṭṭoni, 1978): 60–61 [in Hebrew]. In Safrai’s opinion, Rabban Gamaliel assumed the leadership of the Jews in Palestine only after the Flavian dynasty ended. However, even in this period, the Romans would not have permitted it if those were times of anti-Roman unrest. See also Ephrat Habas-Rubin, “Rabban Gamaliel of Yavneh and his Sons: The Patriarchate Before and After the Bar Kokhva Revolt,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 50 (1999): 21–37.
- 202 On the security motives, see Glen W. Bowersock, “A Report of Provincia Arabia,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 61 (1971): 227; idem, *Roman Arabia* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983), 76–89; David F. Graf, “The Saracens and the Defense of the Arabian Frontier,” *Bulletin of American School of Oriental Research* 229 (1978): 67. On the economic motives, see Michael E. Speidel, “Exercitus Arabicus,” *Latomus* 23 (1974): 935; John C. Mann, “The Frontiers of the Principate,” *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*. II, 1 (1974): 522. In his opinion, the existence of client kingdoms was only an intermediate stage before their full annexation, and therefore it was not necessary to search for a special reason for the establishment of *Provincia Arabia*. See also John W. Eadie, “Artifacts of Annexation: Grand Strategy and Arabia,” in *The Craft of the Ancient Historian*, Festschrift Chester. G. Starr, ed. John W. Eadie (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1985), 407–423.

with Babylonian Jewry and the possibility of Parthian intervention.²⁰³ But this claim does not stand the test of reality for that period. First, no evidence of troubling relations in those years between the Jewish population and the Roman government exists. Moreover, are there any substantial indications from this period or the preceding one of cooperation between the Jews of Palestine and those of the Diaspora in general, and of Parthia in particular, that could have endangered the Roman government in the region? Events from the third century CE certainly cannot serve as evidence for our concerns.²⁰⁴ It is sufficient to examine the part played by the Jews of Parthia during the Great Revolt in order to see that the cooperation was extremely slight and that the Great Revolt could not have served as a possible precedent that might have endangered the Romans.²⁰⁵ In addition, the reduction of the auxiliary forces in Provincia Judaea in 106 CE²⁰⁶ contradicts Applebaum's claim that the Romans isolated Provincia Judaea to prevent its citizens from forming relations with Babylonian Jews and certainly could not have occurred if there was unrest in the province.

2. The unusual appointment of Pompeius Falco as governor of Judaea in 105/106 CE was also interpreted as an indication of unrest in the province in the period before the establishment of Provincia Arabia and in the period that followed its annexation.²⁰⁷ Before his assignment in Judaea, Falco was the governor of the imperial praetorian province Provincia Lycia Pamphlia in 103/4–104/5 CE. After this, instead of being appointed to the position of consul, as was the usual practice in Roman administration, he was sent once again to serve in the praetorian province of Judaea and became consul only in 108 CE.²⁰⁸ In the view of some scholars, Falco

203 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 4. See also Shimeon Applebaum, *Jews and Greeks in Ancient Cyrene* (Leiden: Brill 1979), Ch. 7, 261–263.

204 Applebaum, previous note, 262, note 6: “Much light on this consideration is shed, in my opinion, by certain phenomena of the 3rd century, which may be regarded as valid also in the time of Trajan. I refer to the messianic aspiration expressed in the frescos of the synagogue at Dura Europos (see here 322), and the words of *Lam. Rabba*, (I, 43): ‘If you see a Persian horse tied up in Israel, expect the footsteps of the Messiah!’”

205 See The speech of Agrippa II in Josephus, *JW*, II, 388–389.

206 See above, note 31.

207 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 1.

208 On the career of Falco, see Edward Dabrowa, *Legio x Fretensis: A Prosopographical Study of its Officers (I–III c. AD)* (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1993), 36–37; *Quintus Pompeius Falco*; Anthony R. Birley, *The Roman Government of Britain* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 114–118.

was sent for second period of service in a praetorian province because of the unrest that prevailed in Judaea, which required a governor of rich military experience. Falco was indeed familiar with Judaea from the period in which he served there as a tribune in Legio x Fretensis,²⁰⁹ and the extensive military experience he acquired as the commander of Legio v Macedonia²¹⁰ trained him to deal with the problems of a turbulent province. In addition, a number of incidents during the period of Falco's governorship in Judaea proved that disturbances occurred which required the appointment of a governor with his qualifications. The first proof is the dedicatory inscription from Ephesus dated to 123/124 CE in honor of Pompeius Falco. The inscription was set up by Flavius Iuncus and Ulpus Proculus, representatives of the demos and boule of the city Flavia Neapolis. In the inscription, Falco is termed *savior and benefactor* (σωτήρ καὶ ἐνεργέτης)²¹¹ terms that, in Applebaum's view, are associated with the assistance given by Falco to Flavia Neapolis, which had been damaged during the upheavals that occurred in 107 CE throughout the province.²¹² This evidence is supplemented by archaeological finds from Jaffa, mainly the Agoranomos inscription of 107 CE and the signs of destruction in a layer dated to the second century CE. In Applebaum's view, these also testify to unrest in Provincia Judaea during Falco's term of service there.²¹³ The archaeological find from Jaffa, which Applebaum cited, is described in a report by Jacob Kaplan about his fifth excavation

209 See *CIL*, III, 1211, 7 = *ILS* 1036; *CIL* X, 6321 = *ILS* 1037. In an inscription from Ephesus, there is evidence for Falco's service as a tribune in the Tenth Legion Gemina: *trib] mil.leg.x Gem]Inae*. See H. Engleman, Dieter Knibbe, Reinhold Merkelbach, eds., *Die Inschriften von Ephesus*, III (Bonn: Habelt, 1980), 112, no. 713. According to the editors, Desau's reading in *ILS* 1036 is erroneous, and with this inscription it is preferable to relate Falco's service as a tribune in Legio x Gemina rather than in Legio x Fretensis. On the other hand, Syme adopted Desau's reading. See Ronald Syme, "Consulates in Absence," *Journal of Roman Studies* 48 (1958): 4, note 6. On the inscription, see Yitzhak Magen, *Flavia Neapolis: Shechem in the Roman Period* (Jerusalem: Staff Officer of Archaeology, Civil Administration for Judea and Samaria: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2009), 331–332 [in Hebrew]. In his opinion, the two dedicators of the inscription were, according to their Roman names, members of the administration of Neapolis.

210 *ILS* 1035.

211 On the inscription, see Dieter Knibbe, *Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts*, 12 (1968–71), cols. 32–39. See also the collection of inscriptions (above, note 209), 112, no. 713, and remarks in *AE* (1972), 178, no. 57.

212 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 77, note 149a.

213 *Ibid.*, 18.

season. Kaplan does indeed mention the find associated with the Agoranomos, but makes no mention at all of the date 107 CE.²¹⁴ From a summary article by Kaplan, "Findings from the Period of Trajan in the Jaffa Excavations," it appears that of the three inscriptions about the Agoranomos, only one is dated to the fourth year of Trajan, which is 102 CE. Also, the fifth-season layer in which the remains of destruction were found is dated by Kaplan specifically to the days of the revolt in the Diaspora.²¹⁵ In view of this, it appears that there is no connection whatsoever between the dedicatory inscription to Falco and the findings in Jaffa. There is also no proof from this evidence of the upheavals that occurred in Flavia Neapolis and in Jaffa during the period of Falco's governorship. The use of the terms *savior* and *benefactor* in the dedicatory inscription provides no foundation for the claim that Falco was associated with the restoration and rebuilding of Flavia Neapolis during his period of service in Judaea because the inscription is formulated in the regular and accepted manner of dedicatory inscriptions. It is possible that the connection between him and Flavia Neapolis was created through his contribution to the various building enterprises in the city.²¹⁶

Another testimony for unrest in Judaea was found in the letter of Pliny to Pompeius Falco in which he asks for Falco's help in appointing Cornelius Minicianus to the position of military tribune.²¹⁷ But in the end, Minicianus was appointed as a military tribune of Legio III Augusta stationed in Africa because he preferred serving in this legion rather than serving in the turbulent and restless Provincia Judaea.²¹⁸ Thus the conclusion of Roland Syme is not certain. He identified Cornelius Minicianus, who is mentioned in the letter of

²¹⁴ See Jacob Kaplan, "The Fifth Season at Jaffa," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 54 (1963): 110–114.

²¹⁵ Jacob Kaplan, "Findings from the Period of Trajan in the Jaffa Excavations," *Eretz Israel* 16 (1981): 412–416 [in Hebrew].

²¹⁶ Dov Gera, *The Roman Government and Army in Judea: From the Destruction of the Second Temple till the Outbreak of the Bar Kokhba Revolt*, M.A. thesis, Hebrew University (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1977), p. 53 [in Hebrew].

²¹⁷ Pliny, *Letters*, 22; Adrian Nicholas Sherwin-White, *The Letters of Pliny*. A historical and Social Commentary (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 429–430. On Cornelius Minicianus, see *PIR* 2 C 1406.

²¹⁸ On his service in Africa, see *ILS* 2722; Werner Eck, *Senatoren von Vespasian bis Hadrian. Prosopographische Untersuchungen mit Einschluss der Jahres und Provinzialfasten der Statthalter* (München, Beck, 1970), 15, note 69; 225, note 164; Ronald Syme (above, note 209), 4; idem, "Pliny's Less Successful Friends," *Historia* 9 (1960): 369–379; Hannah M. Cotton, "Military Tribunates and the Exercise of Patronage," *Chiron* 11 (1981): 238.

Pliny, with a military tribune with the same name mentioned in the inscription that testifies his service in Africa. Yet this identification is not definite. Birley, for example, claimed that there were two different persons: one was the friend of Pliny who received the position of military tribune in the Tenth Legion Fretensis and the other, who had a similar function in Legio III Augusta.²¹⁹

From what has been said above, it appears that the unusual appointment of Falco in Judaea was not made in view of a state of emergency in the province. It is preferable to link it with the establishment of Provincia Arabia and to say that the purpose of his appointment was to ensure a quiet rear region before the Nabataean Kingdom was turned into a Roman province.²²⁰ Researchers have identified a number of events in the years that preceded the Second Revolt that they claim occurred against a background of general unrest in Judaea and its environs and necessitated the reinforcement of the Roman army stationed in the region:

1. In his speech of July 128 CE to Legio III Augusta encamped at Lambaesis in Africa, the emperor Hadrian praised the legion for having sent reinforcements three years earlier of one cohort and four soldiers from every unit in the regiment to a legion that also bore the number three.²²¹ This was Legio III Cyrenaica, which was stationed in Provincia Arabia.²²² The need for reinforcing the legion in Arabia was due, in Applebaum's view, to the security situation in the region. The invasion of nomadic tribes into Arabia made it necessary to transfer forces from Judaea to assist the local stationary force, and this diluted its strength and led to

219 Eric Birley, *Roman Britain and the Roman Army* (Kendal: T. Wilson, 1961), 141, note 17; Margaret Roxan, "Pre-Severan Auxilia in the Notitia Dignitatum," in *Aspects of the Notitia Dignitatum*, eds. Roger Goodburn, Philip Bartholomew (Oxford: British Archaeological Reports 1976), table II, no. 9. In her view, the friend of Pliny commanded the cohort I Damascanorum. See also the remarks of Jones on the identity of Cornelius Minicianus: Christopher P. Jones, "A New Commentary of the Letters of Pliny," *Phoenix*, 22 (1968): 117.

220 Anthony Birley, *The Fasti of Roman Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 98. According to Syme, the appointment of Falco was, in fact, related to the danger on the Parthian border. See Syme (above, note 209), 4.

221 Hadrian's speech: *ILS* 2487. His words about the enforcement: "Quod ante annum tertium cohortem et qua[terons] ex centuries in supplementum comparum tertianonrum dedistis." On Hadrian's speeches see Michael P. Speidel, *Emperor Hadrian's Speeches to the African Army: A New Text*, (Mainz: Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums 2006).

222 See David Kennedy, "Legio VI Ferrata: The Annexation and Early Garrison of Arabia," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 84 (1980): 283–309.

anti-Roman disturbances in Judaea. The unrest there forced the Romans to transfer to it some military forces from Arabia, which made it once again exposed to invading nomadic tribes. According to Applebaum, this explains the reinforcement of the legion in Arabia.²²³ But this claim raises difficulties: First, the matter of invading nomadic tribes into Arabia is doubtful.²²⁴ Second, the need for reinforcing Legio III Cyrenaica was because of the inability to find a sufficient number of candidates with Roman citizenship among the population in the province to be recruited into the legion. At this early stage in the history of Provincia Arabia, it was not possible, for security reasons, to grant Roman citizenship to local recruit candidates to fill the vacancies caused by the accepted practice of releasing soldiers after a prolonged period of service. Kennedy thought that because this was a normal process, the reinforcement of the legion took two years, and within this period of time, about seven hundred soldiers from Africa took up their positions in Legio III Cyrenaica.²²⁵ The integration of soldiers into the Roman forces in Arabia, which lasted for two years, cannot therefore be an indication of a state of emergency in the region that necessitated a rapid reinforcement of Legio III Cyrenaica.

2. Two papyri give evidence associated with our subject:
 - a. A papyrus of the year 128 CE was a receipt given to weavers in the village of Soknopaiou Nesos for the delivery of nineteen tunics and five short cloaks (*palliola*) for soldiers serving in Judaea.²²⁶ Alon claimed that this is proof of reinforcements sent to Judaea, since the needs of the army were usually supplied by the province itself.²²⁷

²²³ Applebaum, "Second Revolt," 47–48; idem, *Prolegomena*, 18.

²²⁴ On the debate concerning this matter between Negev and Gihon, see, for example A. Negev, "The Chronology of the Middle Nabatean Period," *Yediot* 31(1967): 196. Negev attributed the abandonment of Avdat to the invasion of nomadic tribes, the Safaitic and Thamudic, in 128 CE. But Gichon thinks that the reason for it was connected with the Bar Kokhba revolt. See S. Applebaum, M. Gichon (eds.), *Israel and Her Vicinity in the Roman and Byzantine Periods*, (Tel Aviv 1967), 47–48.

²²⁵ Kennedy "Legio VI Ferrata," 306. On the recruitment of Roman citizens only for service in the legions, see Parker, 169–172.

²²⁶ See *Papyrus Rylands*, II, 189.

²²⁷ Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 577–579. Against Alon's view, see Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 19; Schäfer, 130–131. See Raffaeli's interpretation of the papyrus: S. Raffaeli, "Jewish Coinage and the Date of the Bar Kokhba Revolt," *Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society* 3 (1923): 193–196. It is difficult to adopt his conclusions, mainly because of his dating of the revolt to the years 122–125.

On January 22, 150 CE, twenty-two veterans of Legio x Fretensis submitted a petition (*libellus*) to the governor D. Velius Fidus,²²⁸ in which it was said that they had been recruited into the navy in the consul-ate year of M. Acilius Glabrio and C. Bellicius Flaccus Torquatus Tebanianus (124 CE) and of M. Lollius Paullinus D. Valerius Asiaticus Saturninus II and L. Epidius Titius Aquilinus (125 CE) and had served in Classis Praetoria Misensis. The petition further stated that during their service, Hadrian had transferred them to Legio x Fretensis. They had been good soldiers for a period of over twenty years during the time they had served in the legion. They were recently discharged and wanted to return to their native city of Alexandria in Egypt. They requested release from the army not as navy men but as soldiers.²²⁹ From this, emerges the understanding that they had joined Legio x Fretensis before 130 CE. The attachment of soldiers serving in the navy to a legion at this time indicates, in the view of some researchers, a state of tension in Judaea before the revolt that made it necessary to reinforce the legion.²³⁰ But at this stage, I claim that this papyri evidence indicates only that there were some soldiers of Egyptian origin among those in Legio x Fretensis; it cannot be learned from it that the legion in Judaea was reinforced because of a state of emergency in the province on the eve of the Second Revolt.²³¹ In fact, until 1999 the link between the papyri and the events of the revolt was very marginal.²³² However, with the publication of the article by Eck “The Bar Kokhba Revolt: The Roman Point of View” the contents of the papyrus turned into major evidence for the intensity of the Second Revolt. In Eck’s view, the fact that Hadrian was prepared to transfer sailors from the navy to serve in a regular legion and to grant them Roman citizenship

228 The publishers of the papyrus identified the governor with Vilius Kadus. Following Rea’s work, he is identified as D. Velius Fidus. See John Rea. “Two Legates and a Procurator of Syria-Palaestina.” *ZPE* 26 (1977): 217–222; *AE* 1976, no. 689; Smallwood, 437, 551.

229 See *CIL*, XVI, 146 No. 13; *Papiri Greci e Latini de Florence*, Florence 1928, no. 1026; *CPL* 117; Daris, Sergio. *Document per la storia dell’esercito in Egitto* (Milan: Societa editrice vita e pensiero, 1964): 194–200.

230 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 577; Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 19; Smallwood, 437. See also Peter Thomsen, “Die Römische Flotte in Palästina-Syrien,” *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 68 (1951): 80–81; Birley, *Hadrian*, 274.

231 On Egyptian soldiers who served in Legio x Fretensis, see *JW*, 7, 199; for the years 69/69–93 see *CIL*, XVI, A 13.37. See also Bowersock (above, note 202), 233, note 95.

232 For the history of the papyrus research, see David J. Thomas, “The Subscriptions in *PSI* IX 1026 and *P. Oxy.* XLVII 3364,” *TYCHE* 18 (2003): 201–206.

is evidence of an exceptional situation in Provincia Judaea as a result of the revolt.²³³ I shall now discuss the intensity of the Second Revolt in detail in rabbinical sources.²³⁴

Rabbinical Sources

Alon coined the concept *political banditry* to describe the phenomenon of the bandit movement that was active during the period of unrest that prevailed in Judaea during the years that preceded the Bar Kokhba revolt, as described in rabbinical sources. He also claimed a connection between this phenomenon and the rebellious unrest preceding the Second Revolt.²³⁵ However, this claim is worth examining and discussing again. Do the sources used by Alon and others who followed him really contain proof of anti-Roman political banditry?²³⁶ If so, what was the background for this unrest—besides the constant desire to be liberated from Roman rule—and was political banditry one of the results of Roman rule in Judaea? Can this movement be regarded as one of the main reasons for the situation in Judaea deteriorating to the point of no return, to the state of open rebellion against Rome? There is a lack of clarity and agreement among the researchers on the issue of the nature of these bandits described in the sources. Some of the points of controversy will be exemplified by a presentation of various sources, the interpretation given to them, and the conclusions that researchers derived from them.

1. Lamentations Rabba, 3, 6:

The son of R. Haninah son of Teradion, became associated with a band of robbers whose secret he disclosed, so they killed him and filled his mouth with dust and pebbles. After three days, they placed him in a coffin and wished to pronounce a eulogy over him out of respect for his father, but the latter would not permit it. He said to them, 'Allow me and I will speak concerning my son.' He opened his discourse with the text, 'Neither have I hearkened to the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me! I was well nigh in all evil in midst of the congregation and assembly.' (Prov. 5:13f) His mother quoted over him, 'A foolish son is vexation to his father, and bitterness to her that bore him' (Prov. 17:25);

²³³ See Eck "Roman Point of View," 79–89.

²³⁴ See below 329–337.

²³⁵ Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 13–16.

²³⁶ See Urbach, "From Judaea to Galilee;" Oppenheimer, "Jewish Community in Galilee," 53–66, 82–83; Herr, "Participation of Galilee," 67–80.

while his sister quoted over him, ‘Bread of falsehood is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel stones.’ (Prov. 20:17).²³⁷

Most of the scholars dealing with this source have claimed that this was a typical group of political bandits since it was not possible that the son of Rabbi Haninah ben Teradion, one of the leading figures in the Galilee, would actually join a band of robbers. The very behavior of the bandits who wished to bury him and the words of the family who had lost him because he betrayed the bandits indicate that Haninah ben Teradion approved the actions of the bandits who had killed his son. The anti-Roman position of Rabbi Haninah and the fact that he was one of the ten martyrs reinforce the argument that the bandits were acting for political anti-Roman reasons.²³⁸

Schäfer objected to this majority claim. His main criticism was directed against the assumption, which he called *naïve*, that the son of a rich and respected person cannot join mere robbers. Moreover, from the words of Rabbi Haninah, his wife, and his daughter that castigate the son and brother, he concludes that the son joined ordinary robbers.²³⁹

2. TB Niddah 61a:

A rumor was spread that certain Galileans had killed a person. They came to R. Tarfon and said to him, “Will the Master hide us?” “How,” he replied, “should I act? Should I not hide you, they would see you. Should I hide you, I would be acting contrary to the statement of the Rabbis . . . As to slander, though one should not believe it, one should take note of it. Go you and hide yourselves.”²⁴⁰

The murderers from the Galilee region, who tried to find refuge with Rabbi Tarfon in Lod, were not identified as criminal killers but as terrorists who were acting in the Galilee against Roman rule. Urbach goes as far as to say that “those Galileans who found their way to the academy of Rabbi Tarfon in

237 *Midrash Rabba, Lamentations* 3, 6. See *Midrash Rabbah* Translated into English with notes, glossary and indices under the editorship of H. Freedman, Maurice Simon, (London: Soncino, 1939), 1, 195. Compare with tractate *Semahoth*, 12, 13 (Higger Edition, 199–200).

238 See Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 571–574; Urbach, “From Judaea to Galilee,” 67; Oppenheimer, “Jewish Community in Galilee,” 60–61; Herr, “Participation of Galilee,” 70–71. Herr delays the event described in the source to the year 130 CE. See also Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 15.

239 Schäfer, 108.

240 *Babylonian Talmud*, Tractate Niddah 61a.

Lod were not unlikely to have been Torah scholars.” Their affiliation with the banditry movement derives from the fact that Rabbi Tarfon, even though he did not grant them refuge, did not have reservations about their actions, did not betray them to the authorities, and may even have been pleased at the act of murder.²⁴¹ However, this interpretation of the source is debated. Moshe David Herr, for example, thinks that it does not refer to a criminal or political act of murder but to a false accusation of murder. Rabbi Tarfon refused to hide them because he was afraid that they may have been guilty after all.²⁴² In his review of the political banditry movement, Alon included this source as well. But in his comprehensive discussion on the subject of the sages, imperial rule, and the position of the sages towards Roman law, he made another use of the source and gave a totally different argument for the nonbetrayal of the murderers: “This is also a denial of imperial law even in the sphere of criminal justice, in other words to refrain from cooperation even in the sphere of public safety.”²⁴³

3. TB ‘Avodah Zarah 25b:

It once happened to some disciples of R. Akiba that while journeying to Chezib they were overtaken by robbers who asked them whither they were going. They replied, ‘To Acco’. On reaching Chezib they stopped. The robbers then said to them, ‘Whose disciples are you?’ And they replied, ‘The disciples of R. Akiba.’ Said they, ‘Happy are R. Akiba and his disciples, for no evil man has ever encountered them.’”²⁴⁴ The bandits who met the disciples of Rabbi Akiba on their way to Chezib were identified with the members of the political banditry movement because of the estimation they expressed of Rabbi Akiba and his disciples and their supportive attitude towards them.²⁴⁵ There is no doubt that the identification is also based on the possible participation of Rabbi Akiba in the Second Revolt and his anti-Roman position.²⁴⁶ Nevertheless, the reference could

²⁴¹ See Urbach, “From Judaea to Galilee,” 67; Oppenheimer, “Jewish Community in Galilee,” 60.

²⁴² Herr, “Participation of Galilee,” 70. See also Schäfer, 107.

²⁴³ Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 541–542. *History*, vol. 1, 337–338.

²⁴⁴ *BT*, Avodah Zarah 25b.

²⁴⁵ Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 570–571. Oppenheimer, “Jewish Community in Galilee,” 61. See also Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 19.

²⁴⁶ See below 439–453.

simply be to Jewish robbers,²⁴⁷ because the source goes on to remark, “Come now and see what difference there is between mere thieves of Babylon and robbers of Palestine.” In my view, a comparison between thieves and bandits shows that the bandits who met the disciples of Rabbi Akiba were actually robbers or Jewish thieves.

4. TJ Yevamot 2,4a–b:

“They said before Rabbi Jehudah, it happened that a robber was caught in Cappadocian Caesarea. When he went out to be executed, he said to them, go and tell the wife of Simeon ben Kahana that I killed him when he was coming into Lydda. The case came before the sages and they confirmed his words. Rabbi Jehudah said to them: Is that a proof? He only said, we killed him.”²⁴⁸ Before his execution, Simeon ben Kahana’s murderer (caught in Caesarea of Cappadocia) requests that his victim’s wife be informed of the murder so that she could be released from her *aguna* state. Since Simeon ben Kahana was one of the sages of the Lod Academy during the period between the two revolts, the murder was considered a political act in connection with the unrest in Palestine.²⁴⁹ This conclusion is, in my opinion, too far-fetched. First, of the murder of Simeon ben Kahana is not clear at all. Did he collaborate with the Romans? Second, was the arraignment of the murderer before the court in Caesarea, Cappadocia, connected with the murder of Simeon ben Kahana, or did the murderer repeat his offense? Moreover, the halachic connection of the deed was about releasing the woman from her *aguna* state on the basis of the murder confession. Was a distinction made between the testimony of political bandits and that of ordinary robbers? There is such a distinction which was done whether she was captured by the authorities or by ordinary robbers.²⁵⁰

247 Herr, “Participation of Galilee,” 71. See also Schäfer, 109. He agrees with Herr, but he objected to him, writing: “man fragt sich jedoch, nach welchen Kriterien er Mal für und Mal gegen den politischen Hintergrund pladiert.”

248 See also *TB*, Yevamoth, 25b; *Tosefta* 4, 5 (Zuckerman ed.), 244.

249 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 571–572. See also Saul Lieberman, *Tosefta ki-fshutah: A Comprehensive Commentary on the Tosefta*, Yevamoth, 92; idem, *Tosefta Rishonim*.

250 See *Tosefta*, Ketubot, 4, 5; *TB* Ketubot, 51b.

There are a few other rabbinical sources that were interpreted in the research literature as if they implied unrest in Judaea during the period between the two revolts:

5. Semahoth, 8, 7:

"And thus he (Samuel the Small) spoke at the time of his death, 'Simeon and Ishmael are destined for the sword and the rest of the People for spoliation; great distress will befall after them.' He uttered these words in Aramaic."²⁵¹ Urbach dated this source earlier, to the period of Trajan. In his opinion, the Simeon and Ishmael mentioned in the source are not the well-known sages of this name, but two men who fought against the Romans.²⁵²

6. Tosefta Kelim, 2, 2:

"Said R. Yose, about four elders who were sitting secretly in the store of R. Elazar son of 'Azaria in Sepphoris: R. Huspit and R. Yeshebab, and R. Halafta, and R. Yohanan son of Nuri."²⁵³ The source quoted in the research literature is detached from its context as evidence of a time of emergency, with a stress on the secret meeting in Sepphoris with the participation of five sages. The meeting is interpreted as a clandestine gathering, apparently in fear of the imperial authorities, indicating the alienation between the Jews and the regime. This interpretation should also be linked to the days of the revolt, and the source was indeed connected with the death of Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah. Those claiming that he did not survive until the Bar Kokhba revolt link the source to the days of the War of Quietus.²⁵⁴ Others think that Rabbi Eleazar was still alive

²⁵¹ Semahoth, 8, 7 (Higger ed.), 152–153. The translation is from *The Minor Tractates of the Talmud*, trans. A. Cohen London, Vol. 1, 365.

²⁵² Urbach, "From Judaea to Galilee," 67. See also Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 425–426.

²⁵³ Tosefta Kelim, 2, 2 (Zuckerman ed.), 591. See also S. Lieberman, *Tosefta Rishonim*, vol. III, 74–75.

²⁵⁴ Oppenheimer, "Jewish Community in Galilee," 59. See also Isaac-Roll, "Hadrian's Reign," 64–65, note 56; Shmuel Safrai, "The Ruling as the House of Hillel in Yavneh," *The Jewish World Congress* 3 (1971): 25. He cites *Tosefta Yevamot*, 1, 9, in which R. Yohanan, son of Nuri, is mentioned as rejecting the solution in the controversy about חולצות ולא "שיהו הצרות חולצות ולא" (confusion by reason of ravaging troops), and he dates it to the days of the Bar Kokhba Revolt.

during the Second Revolt and link the source to its period.²⁵⁵ Schäfer attributes the source to the days of the Hadrian decrees; in his opinion, the source does not contain any evidence of being a secret meeting, and the five sages met only to deal with halachic matters. The prohibition to gather for this purpose, if it did indeed exist, could only have been during the Hadrian period.²⁵⁶ However, a study of the entire source will portray the meeting in a different way. In relation to a discussion on the laws of purity, a precedent was established of an instance in which four sages ruled in favor of purity while sitting in the store of Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah.²⁵⁷ In view of this, the meeting in Sepphoris should not be seen as evidence for a period of crisis in the relations between the Jewish population and the Roman authorities.

7. Midrash Rabba, Numbers 23,1:

“Our Rabbis said: ‘It once happened that evil edicts from the government were brought to the chiefs of Sepphoris.’ They went and informed R. Eleazar son of Prata, saying ‘Master, evil edicts have been brought to us from the government. What do you advise? Shall we flee?’ He was afraid to tell them to flee, so he spoke to them in veiled language saying, ‘Must you ask me? Go and ask Jacob and Moses and David. What is written of Jacob? And Jacob fled (Hosea, 12:13). So also of Moses: And Moses fled (Ex. 2:15. And so it was with David too. Now David fled, and escaped (1 Sam. 19:8).’”²⁵⁸ There are two things in this source that are debated. First, what is the meaning of the expression *evil edicts*? Second, what is the identification of Rabbi Eleazar ben Prata that can date the source and even interpret the meaning of *evil edicts*? Alon, in his discussion of the source, questioned whether this was the first Rabbi Eleazar ben Prata who was active during the Second Revolt or the second Rabbi Eleazar ben Prata who lived at the end of the second century. In his opinion, *evil edicts* by the imperial government meant “exceptional payments and casting responsibility on the ‘great ones’ among the Jews, members of the city leadership, the boule.” The source, in his view, served to indicate

255 Herr, “Participation of Galilee,” 70; Urbach, “From Judaea to Galilee,” 68, He was debating between Polemos of Kitos (i.e., the War of Quietus) or the Second Revolt.

256 Schäfer, 106–107.

257 See Tzvee Zahvy, *The Traditions of Eleazar Ben Azaria* (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press for Brown University 1977), 100–101, 323.

258 See also *Tanhuma*, Masei (תנחומי), 1 (Buber’s ed.).

that the sages did not see that it was forbidden to refrain from payment.²⁵⁹ Herr identified Rabbi Eleazar ben Prata as the first one who lived during the Bar Kokhba revolt and the annihilation decrees and claimed that one could interpret *evil edicts* as rebellious underground activities. According to him, this should be linked with what was related about the arrest and trial of Rabbi Eleazar ben Prata, an indication of his political subversive activities.²⁶⁰

8. Mishnah, Yevamot, 16:7:

“R. Akiba said: ‘When I went down to Nehardea to ordain a leap-year, there met me Nehemiah of Beth Deli, and he said to me, ‘I have heard that in the Land of Israel the sages, excepting R. Judah b. Baba, do not suffer a woman to marry again on the evidence of one witness’. I answered, ‘It is so’. He said to me, ‘tell them in my name (ye know that this country is in confusion by reason of ravaging troops) I received a tradition from Rabban Gamliel the Elder that they may suffer a woman to marry again on the evidence of one witness’. And when I came and recounted the matter before Rabban Gamliel he rejoiced at my words and said. ‘We have now found a fellow [disciple] for R. Judah b. Baba,’ whereupon Rabban Gamliel remembered that certain men were killed at Tel Arza and Rabban Gamliel the Elder suffered their wives to marry again on the evidence of one witness.’”²⁶¹ The source deals with two subjects. One of them concerns the departure of Rabbi Akiba for Nehardea in order to ordain a leap year, and the other deals with the marriage of a woman in Palestine on the evidence of a single witness. Actually, the first subject merely serves as a background for the meeting between Rabbi Akiba and Nehemiah of Beth Deli, in which the two men discussed the second subject. However, the two subjects were mixed together in research that dealt with the reasons that compelled Rabbi Akiba to go to Babylonia in order to ordain the leap year, even though this was done in Palestine, and information about it was sent out to Babylonia in various ways. The main argument derives from the sentence “the country is ravaged by troops,” an expression that constitutes evidence for the period of the War of Quietus.²⁶²

²⁵⁹ Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 513.

²⁶⁰ Herr, “Participation of Galilee” 69; Against this argument, see Schäfer, 105–106.

²⁶¹ See also *Mishna* ‘Eduyot, 8. 5: “R. Akiba testified in the name of Nehemiah of Beth Deli that a woman is permitted to marry again on the evidence of [but] one witness.”

²⁶² Urbach, “From Judaea to Galilee,” 68. See Büchler, “Economic Condition of Judaea,” 138, who wrote, “this country (Judea) is in confusion by reason of ravaging troops.”

Aharon Oppenheimer rightly separated the two subjects. In his opinion, dealing with the question of a woman marrying on the evidence of one witness conforms to a situation of emergency, which can be understood from the words of Nehemia, “this country is in confusion by reasons of ravaging troops.” He regarded this expression as testifying to the difficulties in traveling from Babylonia to Palestine, especially through the road in Galilee.²⁶³ But for Alon, the phrase *this country is in confusion by reasons of ravaging troops* referred to Babylonia and not to Palestine. Moreover, he considers that the word *troops* is a reference to nomadic Arab tribes who had been harassing the frontier regions of Babylonia and Nehardea.²⁶⁴ Herr, who examined the sources in which the word *troops* appears, claimed that they contained no indication of war or conflict, but were only meant to obtain material benefits.²⁶⁵ Also, the journey of Rabbi Akiba to Nehardea to ordain the leap year is not connected to any prohibition by the Romans or a state of war in Palestine, but simply to examine in Babylonia certain matters concerning the question of the leap year.²⁶⁶

9. Tosefta Yom Tov, 2, 6:

“They do not prepare food either for gentiles or for dogs’ consumption on the festival day. Simeon of Teman did not go out on the night of the festival to the school house (Beth Midrash). At dawn R. Judah son of Baba came upon him. He said to him, ‘why did you not come last night to the school house?’ He said to him, ‘a certain religious duty came my way, so I went and did it. A gentile troop came to town. And they were afraid that they might make trouble for the townsfolk. So we prepared a calf for them and gave them food and drink and made a place for them to stay, so that they would not make trouble for the townsfolk.’”²⁶⁷ Urbach linked this source with evidence of a rebellious movement in the Galilee. In his introduction to the source, he wrote: “It seems to me that all the above information is sufficient evidence for the existence of a rebel movement in the Galilee, which found the support of certain sages, including those who were later to become famous as rebels and martyrs such as Rabbi

²⁶³ Oppenheimer, “Jewish Community in Galilee,” 83.

²⁶⁴ Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 240–242.

²⁶⁵ Moshe David Herr, “The Problem of War on Sabbath in the Second Temple and Talmudic Periods,” *Tarbiz* 30 (1961): 342–343 [in Hebrew]; idem, “Participation of Galilee,” 72; Schäfer, 109–11.

²⁶⁶ Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 242–245.

²⁶⁷ See also TB, Yom Tov, 21a Liberman, Tosefta, 249.

Akiba, Rabbi Haninah ben Teradion, and also Rabbi Judah ben Baba as this becomes clear from the following story.”²⁶⁸ In his general discussion of the economic and social conditions in Palestine, Alon included the source that deals with the obligations upon citizens to provide billet or lodgings in their homes and supply of food requirements for soldiers and visiting government officials. For Alon, the source cited above constituted proof of the obligation of supplying food, and he dated it to the beginning of the second century.²⁶⁹

10. Tosefta Baba Qamma, 8, 11:

“Said R. Ishmael, the house of my father was one of the Galilean householders. On what account was it wiped out? Because they gave rulings in civil cases with a single judge, and because they raised small cattle.” Oppenheimer, who followed Alon in attributing this source to the War of Quietus,²⁷⁰ claimed that the prohibition to raise small cattle was made in the Jabneh period,²⁷¹ even though Alon and Oppenheimer himself in another document linked the destruction of the father’s household to the Bar Kokhba revolt.²⁷² Herr, who based his assessment on the claim of Urbach that the prohibition to raise small cattle preceded the Jabneh period and should be attributed to the period before the destruction of the Temple, said that this source may have described the results of the Great Revolt.²⁷³ Schäfer, in his discussion of the source, rejected both possibilities and claimed that it cannot be dated on the basis of estimating when the prohibition to raise small cattle was made.²⁷⁴

As previously mentioned, the number of sources that presumably testify to political banditry and unrest in Palestine during the period between the War of Quietus and the outbreak of the Second Revolt is relatively small. Additionally, there is no agreement regarding them in the research literature, not even among those scholars who consider them as historical sources. In fact, except

²⁶⁸ Urbach, “From Judaea to Galilee,” 67–68.

²⁶⁹ Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, vol. I, 187–188. See also Herr (above, note 90), 432.

²⁷⁰ Oppenheimer, “Jewish Community in Galilee,” 59.

²⁷¹ Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 225.

²⁷² Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 602; Oppenheimer, “Galilee in the Bar Kokhba Revolt,” 227–234.

²⁷³ Herr, “Participation of Galilee,” 72. See also E.E. Urbach, “The Jews in Their Land during the Tanaitic Period,” *Behinot* 4 (1953): 70–71 [in Hebrew].

²⁷⁴ Schäfer, 111–112.

for source 1, for which there is agreement that it gives evidence of political banditry, no consensus can be found regarding their nature and the acts of banditry described in them. Some regard the bandits as Torah scholars who joined the anti-Roman rebel movement (e.g., source 2); and therefore Urbach can sum up by saying that “It seems to me that there is sufficient evidence in all the above information to prove the existence of a rebel movement in the Galilee which found support among certain sages including those who were later to become famous as rebels and martyrs.”²⁷⁵ Others, however, regard the bandits described in these sources merely as robbers (e.g., source 3).

Concerning the difficulties associated with sources 4–9 regarding the unrest in Judaea between the two revolts, it is enough to recall that Herr himself, who found evidence in source 7 for subversive rebellious activity, notes in relation to this same source, “However, there is nothing explicit here as to what the reference was for those evil edicts, and perhaps it referred to the issue of taxation and duties or similar matters.”²⁷⁶ Understand the evil edicts in this way necessitates the rejection of his claim regarding underground subversion.

On the study of another issue, the betrayal of the bandits to the authorities as a result of cooperation between the sages and the imperial authorities during the period after the Bar Kokhba revolt, Alon noted that these are “actual bandits who sometimes even murder people and not as those interpreted by the sages as zealous rebels.”²⁷⁷ In view of this remark, It should be asked, is not Alon’s interpretation of the sources regarding political banditry the same as that of the sages, whose interpretation he supposedly opposes? Regarding these sources in accordance with the statement made by Alon above renders his assertion about the existence of political banditry before the Second Revolt questionable and does not provide proof of political subversion against the Roman regime that could be regarded as one of the main reasons for the deteriorating situation in Judaea during the years 117–132 CE, until the outbreak of the Second Revolt.

In my view, the sources mentioned above indicate a different phenomenon; from them and from other sources that are yet to be discussed, can be derived knowledge of the existence of a social phenomenon in Palestine that has been called *Social Banditry* in various studies. This is a term borrowed from the social sciences and has been adopted by historians of ancient history in examining certain social phenomena associated with revolts in the ancient

²⁷⁵ Urbach, “From Judaea to Galilee,” 67.

²⁷⁶ Herr, “Participation of Galilee,” 69; idem (above, note 265), 334, note 79.

²⁷⁷ Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 575.

world.²⁷⁸ Social banditry is a primitive form of social protest and cannot be regarded as a political phenomenon because the term applies solely to a period before political protest and banditry. In order to understand the characteristics of social banditry and to examine the sources associated with the period before the Bar Kokhba revolt in light of this phenomenon, I will look to the studies of Hobsbaum on this subject.²⁷⁹

Social banditry is a phenomenon that mainly includes minorities or individuals belonging to the village farm society that was based on agriculture and composed of tenant farmers and landless workers. Its rise is associated with external and internal factors that influence a society subjected to foreign occupation. During such a period of foreign rule, a new social structure is created by dismantling the old social structure, breaking its traditional molds, and producing a new ruling class. This new reality creates a double pressure on society both by the foreign rule and by the resultant new social ranks, which usually cooperate with it as well. Against this background and in conditions of economic crisis or periods of drought, one can find the emergence of social banditry. This phenomenon occurs particularly in places where the administration is not sufficiently ordered and efficient. It also emerges because of objective reasons, for example, difficulties in traversing specific territories due to obstacles such as mountains, forests, and borders. In such regions, there existed full cooperation between the bandits and the rural population. Since the bandits emerged from this population and share the same system of values and religious beliefs, their activities are not perceived by the villagers as criminal acts. In fact, it is this special relationship that makes their actions a social activity. The phenomenon of banditry is not a complex rural movement but instead reflects the unrest and dissatisfaction of the farmers effectually represented by the bandits.

When the dissatisfaction of the farmers turns into a movement of rural social rebellion or a national liberation movement, banditry loses its value and efficacy. Therefore, the function of movements of this kind is very limited, and such movements do not constitute the main backbone of the struggle to

278 See also Richard A. Horsley, John S. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs: Popular Movements at the Time of Jesus* (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1985); Richard A. Horsley, *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence: Popular Jewish Resistance in Roman Palestine* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987).

279 See Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movements in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959); idem, *Bandits* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1969); Henry A. Landsberger, ed. *Rural Protest: Peasant Movements and Social Change* (Edinburgh: Macmillan, 1974), 142–157.

improve the lot of the farmers or to oppose foreign rule. An understanding of the sources previously dealt with develops on the basis of these characteristics of social banditry. The appearance of bandits in Galilee in particular on the eve of the War of Quietus is undoubtedly linked with sparse Roman military supervision in the region. The difficult conditions in the area for regular army transportation and the convenient hiding places for bandits allowed for a wide range of banditry activities, as noted in our sources.²⁸⁰

In my prior discussion on the composition of the Roman army in Judaea, I mentioned the stationing of the Second Legion in Legio as one of the results of the War of Quietus. The Romans added this legion to the province in order to close the gaps in its defense and to increase the efficiency of the administration in the Galilee region. As this discussion unfolds, it becomes apparent that perhaps one of the reasons for the nonparticipation of the Galilee in the Bar Kokhba revolt was the tightening of military control around the Galilean population. Also, from the aforementioned sources, some of the main characteristics of social banditry surface. The close cooperation between the bandits and the local population, mainly the rural one, was a cornerstone for the existence of social banditry. The local population did not regard the bandits as anarchists or criminals and did not treat their actions as crimes. It is, therefore, not surprising that Rabbi Haninah ben Teradion in source 1 remained in support of the bandits, even though they had murdered his son. He reconciled himself to this because his son had violated one of the most serious principles of social banditry by breaking the bond of silence between the bandits and the population that constituted their rearguard.

A similar testimony for the bond of silence emerges from source 2. Although Rabbi Tarfon does not grant refuge and concealment to the bandits, he does not betray them to the authorities. From source 3, arises the realization that the bandits respect Rabbi Akiba, and the Talmud adds the words, "Come now and see what difference there is between mere thieves of Babylon and robbers of Palestine." The bandits' respect is not surprising, they are regarded as part of social banditry, a characteristic of which is commonly shared religion and values with the society from which it emerged. This clarifies the esteem expressed for Rabbi Akiba in the source.

My criticism of viewing the phenomenon that characterized the years between the two revolts in Judaea as political banditry is directed mainly against the unfounded claim about continuous unrest in the province due to the pressure and repression of the local Roman authorities. Our discussion

280 Lincoln H. Blumell, "Social Banditry? Galilean Banditry from Herod until the Outbreak of the First Jewish Revolt," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 27 (2008): 35–53.

contends that most of the sources from which one could presumably conclude continuous unrest and disturbances in Judaea have no clear or certain basis. Nevertheless, I have no intention of claiming that the country was completely at peace. The sources I have dealt with in the previous section indicate social unrest and social protest against foreign rule. Social banditry usually becomes a hotbed for rebellious movements of a political and nationalist nature. However, in itself, social banditry is powerless, has no influence, and is incapable of acting in an organized manner against foreign rule. A well-organized uprising against the conquerors demands unity under a strong and influential leadership. It is at this point that social bandits lose their values and essentiality and became ordinary soldiers in the ranks, as will be seen.

1.4 Socio-Economic Motives

1.4.1 *The Agrarian Situation*

The agrarian reality and the situation of Jewish agriculture in Provincia Judaea between the years 70 and 132 CE was perceived in the research literature as the main reason for the Second Revolt. This revolt was thought to have been the outcome of socioeconomic conditions in those years, resulting from the suppression of the Great Revolt that led to far-reaching changes in the state of Jewish agriculture. The policy of suppression was reflected in the widespread confiscation of lands from their Jewish owners, who were dispossessed of their estates; those Jews were then turned into tenant farmers of their own lands. This insupportable situation for the Jewish farmers during the period between the revolts led them to become the standard bearers of the revolt.²⁸¹ To clarify the above claims and determine whether the Bar Kokhba revolt was indeed an agrarian revolt, I will deal with two issues:

- a. Is it possible to derive from various sources the scope of land expropriation after the suppression of the Great Revolt, and as an outcome the situation of the Jewish farmers actually changed for the worse during those years?
- b. Do the sources contain explicit testimony that it was Jewish farmers who raised the standard of rebellion and even played a major role during the Second Revolt?

281 Applebaum, "Land Question," 283–287; idem, "Background," 211–218; idem, "Economic Life," 629–699; idem, *Prolegomena*, 9–15; idem, "Judaea as a Roman Province," 381, 385–395.

Josephus, *JW*, VII, 216–217:

“About the same time Caesar sent instructions to Bassus and Liborius Maximus the procurator, to dispose of all Jewish land. For he founded there no city of his own while keeping their territory, but only to eight hundred veterans did he assign a place for settlement called Emmaus.”²⁸² The words of Josephus (concerning the instructions sent by Vespasian in 71 CE to the governor Bassus and the procurator Liborius Maximus) serve as the main testimony on which researchers have based their arguments about the agrarian situation in Judaea after the suppression of the Great Revolt. These instructions reflect Roman policy regarding the lands in the province.²⁸³ The instructions of Vespasian were the subject of Isaac’s research that reached the conclusion that they could not be an indication for the widespread expropriation of lands by the Romans. In spite of this conclusion and of his detailed discussion, I will focus the examination on one paragraph from Josephus: “He kept the land (χώρα) as his private estate.” From this comes the impression that Vespasian took land for himself as the property of the emperor (*Patrimonia Caesaris*) and commanded it to be leased. The identification of these areas will enable us to determine the scope of the land expropriation for this purpose, and if any change did indeed occur as a result in the status of the farmers in these areas.²⁸⁴

In some of his studies, Applebaum identified the χώρα with the region known as הר המלך (=Har Hamelech), and claimed that its meaning was χώρα βασιλική= royal land.²⁸⁵ Despite the difficulties in identifying the term *Har Hamelech* and in determining the bounds of its territorial expanse,²⁸⁶ Applebaum believed,

282 Benjamin H. Isaac, “Judaea after AD 70,” in 112–119 [= idem, “Judaea after AD 70,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 35 (1984): 44–50]. For the translation, see 114.

283 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 59–60; S. Safrai, “Recovery of the Yishuv,” 22–33; Stern, “Roman Government,” 14; Moseh. David Herr, “From the Destruction to the Ben Kozibah Revolt (70–135 CE),” in *The Roman Period, The History of the Land of Israel*, eds. Menahem Stern et al. (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 1984), 293 [in Hebrew].

284 See above, note 2. Isaac’s Postscript, 120–121 and his criticism of G. Veltri, “Enteignung des Landes oder Pax Romana? Zur politischen Geschichte der Juden nach 70 (Josephus, Bell 7, 216–218),” *Frankfurter Judaistische Beiträge* 16 (1988): 1–22.

285 Applebaum, “Land Question,” 284; idem, “Second Revolt,” 46; idem “Economic Life,” 696; idem, *Prolegomena*, 14; idem, “Judaea as a Roman Province,” 386.

286 On this issue, I will mention works that summarize and emphasize the difficulties of the term *Har Hamelech*: Rafael Yankelevitch, “Herodium, Har Hamelekh,” *Cathedra* 20 (1981):

in accordance with the view of Benzion Luria,²⁸⁷ “that this tract of land extended from the Dead Sea until the foothills near Lod (Mishna, *Shevi’it* ix, 2), and southwards in the direction of Bet Guvrin; it encircled most of northern Judaea and southern Samaria (Ephraim) and almost certainly the eastern part of Emek Hefer” (Tosefta, *Shevi’it*, vii, 10).²⁸⁸ According to Applebaum, after the Great Revolt, many changes occurred in the region of Har Hamelech in connection with land ownership. Some of the lands were handed over to moderate collaborating Jews, and Vespasian took some for himself and ordered them to be sold or leased.

The practical result of those changes was that after the revolt, the region included a significant number of leasers of private estates or subleasers of imperial lands, and this new situation made the region into one of the main centers of disturbances during the reign of Hadrian. But a study of the history of crown lands in Judaea and the situation of Jewish agriculture throughout Palestine during the Second Temple period present a different picture from that which emerges from the words of Applebaum above.²⁸⁹ It is possible to trace what happened with the crown lands from the beginning of Hellenistic rule.²⁹⁰ Already in the Ptolemaic period, some of the lands in the country were considered crown lands.²⁹¹ Klein, in his research on estate tenancy, wrote, “If during the period of foreign rule—the Persians, the Ptolemies, the Seleucids,

23–28 [in Hebrew]. He identified the term with Herodium. Zeev Safrai, *Borders and Government in Eretz Israel during the Mishnaic and Talmudic Periods* (Tel Aviv: ha-Kibuts ha-me’uḥad, 1980), 156–157 [in Hebrew]. His conclusion is that since we cannot identify the exact territories of the King’s Mountain, therefore we should also not look for its exact borders. See also his articles “The King’s Mountain: A Riddle without a Solution,” *Nature and Land*, 22 (1980): 204–205 [in Hebrew]; and a more recent one, idem, “Har Hamelech is Still a Riddle,” *Judaea and Samaria Research Studies* 19 (2010), 69–82, which is a response to Yuval Shahaar, “Har Hamelekh—A New Solution to an Old Puzzle,” *Zion* 65 (2000): 275–306 [in Hebrew].

287 Luria, Benzion, *Alexander Jannaeus, King of Judea, approximately 126 BC–76 BC*. (Jerusalem: Kiryat Sefer, 1960), 38–40 [in Hebrew]; idem, *From Jannaeus to Herod: Research in the History of the Second Temple Period* (Jerusalem: Kiryat Sefer, 1974), 52–54 [in Hebrew]; Applebaum, “Background,” 215.

288 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 9–15.

289 Applebaum (above, note 281).

290 Applebaum, “Economic Life,” 433.

291 For evidence concerning royal land in Eretz Israel in the Ptolemaic Period and at the beginning of the Seleucid Kingdom, see Yohanan H. Landau, “A Greek Inscription found near Heftzibah,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 16 (1966): 54–70; Thomas Fischer, “Zur Seleukideninschrift von Heftzibah,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 33 (1979): 131–138; Jean-Marie Bertrand, “Sur l’inscription d’Heftzibah,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und*

the agricultural economy in some parts of the country was conducted according to the estate tenancy method, the early Hasmonaeans brought about a fundamental change in this situation by liberating the country and returning the lands to their owners.”²⁹² Mittwoch²⁹³ and Heinz Kreissig²⁹⁴ claimed that one of the main achievements of the Hasmonaean revolt was the fact that it prevented Antiochus IV from carrying out his plan to turn all the lands belonging to Jews into crown lands. This claim was questioned in the research of Schalit, who claimed that the Hasmonaeans not only did not stop this process, but even accelerated it. In his opinion, the Hasmonaean rulers did indeed make many grants of land that had been added to Judaea as a result of their conquests, but they did so in exchange for the commitment by those receiving the lands to enlist in the Hasmonaean army in time of need. Additionally, the choicest lands were added to the private property of the ruler, in accordance with Hellenistic practice.²⁹⁵ Later on under Hasmonaean rule, especially during the reign of Alexander Jannai, this issue became the main bone of contention between the Hasmonaean ruler and the Pharisees. Against the wishes of the Pharisees, Jannai wanted to make the state lands his personal property and the free farmers into the tenants of the king.²⁹⁶ The assumption of Schalit was expanded in the article of Applebaum, “The Hasmonean Settlement Project: Its Causes and Problems.”²⁹⁷ In Applebaum’s opinion, during the ruling period of Jonathan, the lands in which army veterans were settled had already been considered as the property of the government, and the settlers were regarded as its tenants. This arrangement was due to the need to find a source of livelihood for a considerable number of Jewish farmers who did not have land.

Epigraphik 46 (1982): 167–174; Francis Piejko, “Antiochus III and Ptolemy Son of Thrascas: The Inscription of Hefzibah Reconsidered,” *Antiquité Classique* 60 (1991): 245–259.

292 Shmuel Klein, *Land of Judaea*, 1–41 [in Hebrew].

293 A. Mittwoch, “Tribute and Land-Tax in Seleucid Judea,” *Biblica* 36 (1955): 355.

294 Heinz Kreissig, *Die sozialen Zusammenhänge des jüdischen Krieges*, Klassen und Klassenkampf in Palästina des 1Jahrhunderts v.u.Z. (Berlin Akademie-Verl., 1970).

295 Abraham Schalit, *König Herodes: Der Mann und sein Werk* (Berlin de Gruyter, 1969, 2nd ed.; 2001 with an introduction by Daniel R. Schwartz); idem, “Domestic Politics and Political Institutions,” in *The Hellenistic Age: Political History of Jewish Palestine from 332 BCE to 67 BCE*, ed. Abraham Schalit (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1972), 269–297; Joshua Efron, “Simeon Ben Shatah and Alexander Jannaeus,” in *Studies on the Hasmonean Period*, by Joshua Efron (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 147–153. Efron rejected the evidence for the existence of estates, which were the property of the Hasmonean kings.

296 Schalit, *King Herod*, 400. Applebaum, “Judaea as a Roman Province,” 358–260.

297 Shimeon Applebaum, “The Hasmonean Settlement Project: Its Causes and Problems,” in *Man and Land in Ancient Eretz Israel*, eds. Uriel Rappaport et al. (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 1986), 75–79.

Later on, with the extensive conquests of John Hyrcanus and Alexander Jannai, the land areas that became the property of the Hasmonaean rulers were greatly enlarged and expanded.²⁹⁸

The conquest of Eretz Israel by Pompey and the reorganization of the province made by Gabinius caused harm mainly to Jewish agriculture. The establishment of Hellenistic cities and the detachment of the coastal strip and the Peraea from Judaea²⁹⁹ came at the expense of the Jewish farmers who were settled around these cities and within the above boundaries. Some of them were deprived of their lands and were forced to relocate to areas of dense Jewish population where they became a landless proletariat,³⁰⁰ while those who did not lose their lands were annexed to the Hellenistic cities. For the Jews, this was also an insupportable situation since the struggle for livelihood on the land of Eretz Israel was linked with religious and national elements.³⁰¹ During the period of Herodian rule, the Jewish agricultural situation deteriorated. The number of Jewish tenants and the crown lands at Herod's disposal rose as a result of land expropriation from his political opponents. In addition, he inherited from his family lands in Edom,³⁰² in the Jezreel Valley,³⁰³ and in the areas surrounding Yavneh³⁰⁴. In fact, Herod regarded parts of Peraea, Hulata, the Bashan, the Golan, and the Trachonitis as crown lands. From these lands, he transferred significant portions to the officials of the Herodian administration and his veteran soldiers, and the lands were cultivated by Jewish

298 Ibid., 76–78.

299 Pompey's reorganization of Judaea: *JA*, xiv, 74–76; Ernest Bammel, "Die Neuordnung des Pompeius und das Römisch-Jüdische Bündnis," *Zeitschrift des Palästina-Vereins* 75 (1959): 76–82. For Gabinius' Administrative Division, see *JA*, xiv, 90–91; Baruch Kanael "The Partition of Judaea by Gabinius," *Israel Exploration Journal* 7 (1957): 89–106; Ernest Bammel, "The Organization of Palestine by Gabinius," *Journal of Jewish Studies*, 12 (1961): 159–162; Smallwood, 31–35.

300 Schalit, *King Herod*, 168–169; Applebaum, "Judaea as a Roman Province," 361–367; idem, "Economic Life," 637–656, 660. On page 637, Applebaum argued, "The sudden and massive loss of commerce caused by cutting off the coastal towns and the Decapolis from the Judaeian State, which must have thrown a considerable group of Jews back from the Judaeian State, . . . upon agriculture . . . But the question according to this statement is in what manner? The cutting off of the seashore and the Peraea from Judea caused a severe shortage of land, which according to him forced the peasants to move to the cities, where they turned into a landless proletariat."

301 Uriel Rappaport, "The Relations between Jews and Non-Jews and the Great War against Rome," *Tarbiz* 47 (1978): 11 [in Hebrew].

302 *JA* 17, 291.

303 Josephus, *Life*, 119.

304 *JA* 18, 32.

tenant farmers.³⁰⁵ Applebaum regarded it as understood that the centers of revolt after the death of Herod in 4 BCE were specifically in the three estates in Peraea that were held as crown lands and in the royal estate in Jericho because it was specifically in these regions that the Jewish tenant farmers suffered under the Herodian administration and that constant tension prevailed between them and the officials, whether Jewish or gentile.³⁰⁶ Applebaum adopted Büchler's view that Herod and his heirs received the estates of Har Hamelech and other Hasmonaean property as their inheritance.³⁰⁷ He believed that "legally [these lands] were not transferred to the Caesars until the death of Agrippa II (c. 93 CE)." This was the basis for Applebaum's assumption, which he saw reflected in Jewish sources, that administrative changes—such as the leasing of plots to foreign or pro-Roman brokers (*conductores*) instead of the Jewish ones who had previously performed this function—were made only after the death of Agrippa II.³⁰⁸ In another study he went even further and claimed that the region of Har Hamelech could have been granted as a gift by Agrippa II.³⁰⁹ Even if these assumptions are correct, entirely or partially, the claim that the tenancy fees paid by Jewish tenant farmers to Roman owners were high³¹⁰ has not been proved.³¹¹ And the changes in brokers certainly do not indicate the expropriation of extensive land areas and did not necessarily cause a worsening of the situation for Jewish farmers.

The transfer of lands to the imperial authorities perpetuates a situation that had existed in this region for centuries: these lands were held by rulers or their close relatives and were cultivated by tenant farmers. The degree to which this tenancy method had become well-established in Judaea is testified to by the papyri from Wadi Muraba'at. They show that during the Bar Kokhba revolt, when the rebels took control of the lands that had been held by the Romans, some were returned to their previous owners, but a significant number of plots remained in the hands of the rebel administration and were leased by the prince.³¹²

305 Applebaum, "Economic Life," 657–658; idem, "Judaea as a Roman Province," 367.

306 JW, 2, 457, 652; Applebaum, "Judaea as a Roman Province," 368. Idem, "The Zealots: The Case of Revaluation," *Journal of Roman Studies* 61 (1971): 158, note 27a.

307 Büchler, "Schauplätze," 187–188.

308 Applebaum, "Land Question," 284 and note 28.

309 Applebaum, "Economic Life," 656; idem, "Judaea as a Roman Province," 360–361; *Prolegomena*, 74, note 91.

310 Stern, "Roman Government," 14.

311 Goodblatt, "Jews of Eretz Israel," 160.

312 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 14–15.

In their comments on Document 24, which is a collection of lease certificates in Hebrew, the editors note that "... the autonomous rebel administration continued loyally to follow the Graeco-Roman administrative system and did not change anything except the language of the letters ... it is possible that the leader of the revolt took for himself the rights of these ownerships and the farmers of the land of Israel who were living in the territories governed by his forces were considered as the tenants of the Prince of Israel [Bar Kokhba]."³¹³ The Jewish leasers were forced to pay the tenancy fees as well as tithes from the produce, and it is not clear if these tithes were transferred to the priests or continued to be *annona militaris* to serve the needs of the rebellion.³¹⁴ The leasing of lands by Bar Kokhba during the revolt must have been done by Jewish brokers and supervisors who represented the leader of the revolt, while the farmers were considered as his tenants, yet no evidence exists of any uprising of the farmers against Bar Kokhba!

Rabbinical Sources

The rabbinical sources which focus on the Sikarikon law and the question of oppressors 'מציקים' served as further evidence in the research literature for the attitude of the Roman government towards Jewish farmers after 70 CE.³¹⁵ Applebaum made extensive use of these sources in order to prove that after the suppression of the Great Revolt, the Roman government expropriated large tracts of land, which involved changes in land ownership from which a new social phenomenon emerged: המציקים (oppressors or land expropriation officers). Applebaum asserted that these changes undermined the position of the Jewish farmers, seriously damaging their situation during the years 70–132 CE, and becoming a cause for rebellion.³¹⁶

³¹³ Pierre Benoit, Joseph T. Milik, Ronald de Vaux, eds. *Les Grottes de Murabba'at*, DJD 2, Oxford 1961, XXXX. See also Shmuel Yeivin, "Remarks on Some Problems Raised in the Careful Examination of the Secreted Documents in the Judaean Desert," *Beit Mikra*, 24 (1979): 22–23 [in Hebrew]: "because Bar Kokhba regarded himself as the legal heir of the Roman authorities and on this basis he permitted himself to do as he liked with the lands that the Romans had expropriated by coercion and theft from the Jewish inhabitants of Provincial Judaea!"

³¹⁴ Aharon Oppenheimer, "First Tithe Allocation after the Destruction of the Second Temple," *Sinai* 83 (1988): 273–274, and note 28 [in Hebrew].

³¹⁵ Alon, *History*, vol. 1, 36–38.

³¹⁶ Applebaum, "Land Question," 283–287; idem, "Background," 211–213; idem, "Economic Life," 694–699; idem, *Prolegomena*, 10–12; idem, "Judaea as a Roman Province," 392–394.

In the scholarly literature that deals with these sources, there is no agreement about the time, content, or interpretation of the sources. Moreover, if these sources do indeed reflect the agrarian situation after the Great Revolt, how shall the contradictions between them and other sources that describe landowners and Jewish property after the suppression of the Great Revolt be reconciled?³¹⁷ And how should an understanding of the economic recovery of the Jewish settlement between the two revolts emerge through them?³¹⁸

1.4.2 *The Sikarikon Laws*

1. Mishna, Gittin v,1

The Law of Sikarikon did not apply in the days of the war in Judaea. But after the war and following it applied.³¹⁹

2. Tosefta, Gittin, III, 10

The law concerning the Sikarikon does not apply to the Land of Judah, for the sake of securing the settlement of the province. **Under what circumstances?** In the case of those who were slain before the war and in the time of the war, But in the case of those who were slain from the war and onward the law of the Sikarikon does apply. As to Galilee, it is always subject to the law of the Sikarikon.³²⁰

³¹⁷ Büchler, "Economic Conditions," 98–112; Shmuel Safrai, "The Practical Implementation of the Sabbatical Year after the Destruction of the Second Temple," *Tarbiz* 35 (1966, Part 1): 304–328; *Tarbiz* 36 (1967, Part 2): 1–21. Applebaum rejects Büchler's conclusion. See: Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, p. 9, idem, "Economic Life," who argues that all the sources used by Büchler refer to the regions of Javneh and Lydda, which were settled by Jewish collaborators with the Romans. Therefore, they do not reflect the reality of all Judaea. See also Goodblatt, "Jews of Eretz Israel," 159, 366, note 29, He rejects Büchler and argues for the late date of the source cited by Büchler.

³¹⁸ See Safrai "Recovery of the Yishuv," 18–39.

³¹⁹ "לא היו סיקריקון ביהודה בהרוגי המלחמה ואילך יש בה סיקריקון"

³²⁰ "ארץ יהודה אין בה משום סיקריקון מפני יישוב המדינה במה דברים אמורים בהרוגין שנהרגו לפני מלחמה ובשעת מלחמה אבל הרוגין שנהרגו מן המלחמה"

For an English translation with commentary, see Jacob Neusner, *Tosephta, Gittin* 3: 10, (New York, 1979), 223. *The Tosefta*. Translated from the Hebrew, 2 vols., Peabody, Mass., 2002.

3. *TJ Gittin, v,7b*

There was no law of Sikarikon in Judea. . . . In earlier times they decided on a persecution in Judea because they had a tradition from their forefathers that Jehudah had killed Esau, as it was written: "Your hands are on your enemies' neck." They went and enslaved them, took their fields and sold them to third parties. The original owners could come and repossess; therefore, the land was left absolutely in the hand of the Sikarikon since they refrained from buying. They decreed that the law of Siqarikon = Sikarikon should not apply in Judea. **When was this said?** About war killings before the war. But about any body killed in and after the war, the notion of Sikarikon does not apply. But are those killed before the war not like those killed after the war? Explain it that a Sikarikon came and robbed and suppressed; there was no time left to write the sales contract before murder engulfed the entire world, that practice should not be partial . . . The law of Sikarikon always applies in Galilee.³²¹

Most of the scholars of the Sikarikon laws engaged in language explication and interpretation, ignoring the question of its time and period.³²² Since the article by Safrai that deals with the development of the Sikarikon law, there exists a consensus in the research³²³ that these laws should be dated later and ascribed to the period of the war in Bethar and the decrees that preceded it. It is thought that only against this background would it be possible to interpret the distinction in the law between the Galilee and Judaea: "In the wars of Bar Kokhba . . . the main burden was on Judaea which had suffered extremely from

321 Translation by Guggenheimer, 225–227.

"בראשונה גזרו שמד על יהודה... והיו הולכין ומשעבדין בהן ונוטלין שדותיהן ומוכרין אותן לאחרים והיו בעלי בתים באים וטורפין והייתה הארץ חלוטה בידי סיקריקון. נמנעו מליקח—התקינו שלא יהא סיקריקון ביהודה. בד"א בהרוגי המלחמה אבל הרוגים שנהרגו מן המלחמה והילך יש בהם משום סיקריקון. והרוגים שלפני המלחמה לא כלאחר המלחמה הן..."

322 See Shmuel Safrai, "Sikarikon," *Zion* 17 (1952): 56–64; Martin Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, Exkursus III: Das Sikarikon gesetz, 52–54. See Moshe Gil, "Siqoriquin Forfeited Land," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 76 (2005): 47–62; Yuval Shahar, "Why a Quarter? The Siqarikon Ruling and Roman Law," in *Judaea-Palaestina, Babylon and Rome: Jews in Antiquity*, eds. Benjamin Isaac, Yuval Shahar (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 191–203.

323 Goodblatt, "Jews of Eretz Israel," 159–160; David Rokeah, "Comments on the Revolt of Bar Kokhba," *Tarbiz* 35 (1966): 122–127; Yehiam Shorek, "Hellenistic-Roman Land Tenancy System as Reflected in Talmudic Literature," *Zion* 39 (1974): 223 [in Hebrew].

the destruction of the land and from the many persecutions of the imperial government and land expropriations. Therefore the halacha exempted Judaea during wartime from the Sikarikon laws so that the land would not fall out of Jewish hands.”³²⁴

Even though Applebaum accepted Safrai’s dating, he claimed that some of the sources could be assigned to the period between the two revolts. Since the Mishna and Tosefta were collated at the end of the second century, he claimed that it was reasonable to suppose that the halacha on this matter was created in the circumstances of the first and second revolts.³²⁵ Support for this claim was found by Applebaum in source 3, which describes the agrarian situation in Judaea after the suppression of the Second Revolt. In his view, the last paragraph of the source, which begins with the abbreviation **בד"א** (= **במה דברים אמורים**), stands for **an historical appendix** that clarifies the situation between the revolts: *those killed before the war* refers to the war of 66–70, before the revolt of 132–135; while the last sentence refers to the Second Revolt.³²⁶ In the opinion of Applebaum, the losses in human life and in the lands in Judaea after the destruction of the Temple were so great that the Sikarikon law was not applied in Judaea, although it was applied in the Galilee in order to allow for the acquisition of unclaimed land and for the preservation of the Jewish population in Judaea. The elimination of the Jewish village population in Judaea during the Second Revolt had put an end to the problems involved in the Sikarikon or in the leasing of Jewish lands by Jews. Therefore, in his view, the Sikarikon law that was applied in Judaea could only have been possible in connection with the outcome of the Great Revolt.³²⁷

In opposition to the distinction between those killed in the 66–70 war and those killed in the Second Revolt, which led Applebaum to date the source back to the Great Revolt, I note the words of Goodblatt that completely repudiate this distinction: He argued that, “Scholarly experience demands an exceptional interpretation for the words **במה דברים אמורים** = *under what circumstances*, in the Jerusalem Talmud (Gittin 5, 6, 47b).” In his opinion, the words **דבר אחר** mean *on another matter* and serve as an introduction to the historical appendix that refers to the period before 132 CE. But according to Goodblatt, this interpretation is not possible.³²⁸ In view of the studies by Schwartz on the state

324 Safari (above, note 322), 63.

325 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 10; idem, “Judaea as a Roman Province,” 279.

326 Applebaum, “Judaea as a Roman Province,” 389 and note 184.

327 Ibid.

328 Goodblatt, “Jews of Eretz Israel,” 367, note 36; Applebaum, “Judaea as a Roman Province,” 184, He translated the **בד"א**—as “on another matter.”

of the settlements in Judaea after the Bar Kokhba War,³²⁹ I also reject the claim that the source describes a possible situation only after the Great Revolt; since after the Second Revolt, only a few farmers remained in Judaea. On the basis of the above-mentioned sources, Schwartz concluded that even though the settlements in Judaea were also damaged by the Second Revolt, they were not eliminated; and Jews remained in Judaea even in the early days after the suppression of the Bar Kokhba revolt.³³⁰ The sources dealing with the Sikarikon law should therefore not be regarded as evidence for the situation of Jewish farmers after the Great Revolt. It is the very distinction between Judaea and the Galilee regarding the application of the law that may have been suited to the conditions that were created after the suppression of the Bar Kokhba revolt.

1.4.3 *The Oppressors* (המציקים)

Evidence for the activities of the oppressors in Provincia Judaea after 70 CE, in view of the wide-ranging expropriation of lands from Jewish owners, was found by Applebaum in the two following extracts from the *midrashim*:

1. *Sifre, Deuteronomy Piska, 357:*

'And the Lord showed him all the Land'

He first showed him the Land of Israel inhabited in peace and then showed him the oppressors (מציקים) in possession of it.

'As far as Dan'

God first showed Moses the Land of Dan inhabited in peace and then showed him oppressors in possession of it.

329 See Joshua Schwartz, *Jewish Settlements in Judaea after the Bar Kokhba War until the Arab Conquest*, Jerusalem: Magnes, 1986 [in Hebrew]. The book summarizes his article on the results of the war in Southern Judaea. See idem, "The Land of Judaea after the Suppression of the Bar Kokhba Revolt," *The Bar Kokhba Revolt New Research*, 215–223. Idem, "Jewish Settlements in Judaea Region and the Southern Shore during the Third and Fourth Centuries," *Eretz Israel from the Destruction*, 182–201. See also Zeev Safrai, "Jewish Settlements in Eretz Israel after the Bar Kokhba War," *The Bar Kokhba Revolt New Research*, 185–192.

330 Schwartz, "The Land of Judaea," 218.

'As far as Tzoar'

Referring to the oppressors of Israel, such as the constables employed by the government, who were destined to perish with it."³³¹

2. *Sifre, Deuteronomy Piska 317:*

'And he did eat the fruitage of the field.'

Referring to the four kingdoms.

'And he made him suck honey out of the crag, and oil out of the flinty rock.'

Referring to the oppressors who have taken possession of the Land of Israel, from which it is as difficult to extract a *perutah* as from rock; but in the near future Israel will inherit all of their possessions and will derive pleasure from them as from oil and honey.

'Curd of kine'

Referring to their consuls (פיטקים) and their generals (הגמונים)

'and milk of sheep'

Referring to their colonels (כלירוקים)

'and rams'

Referring to the privileged soldiers (קינטרונים) who extract (food) from between the teeth

³³¹ "ויראהו ה' את כל הארץ מלמד שהראהו ארץ-ישראל מיושבת על שלוותה וחזר והראהו מציקים המחזיקים בה...עד דן מלמד שהראהו ארץ דן מיושבת על שלוותה וחזר והראהו מציקים המחזיקים בה...עד צוער, אלו מציקי ישראל כגון אלו הבלשים הדרים עם המלכות ועתידיים ליאבד עמהם" (ספרי, דברים [מהדורת פינקלשטיין], עמ' 427 *Sifre: A Tannaitic commentary on the book of Deuteronomy, translated from the Hebrew by Reuben Hammer, with introduction and notes by Reuben Hammer, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986).*

'and Bnei Basan'

Referring to the (בניפקרין) who extract (food) from between the teeth

'and be goats'

Referring to their senators (סינוקליטים)

'with the kindly fat of wheat'

Referring to their noble ladies (מטרינאות)

'and of the blood of the grape thou drankest foaming wine'

Referring to in the near future Israel will inherit their possessions and will derive pleasure from them as from oil and honey.³³²

In the opinion of Applebaum, these two *midrashim* are to be dated to the end of the second century, although they contain ancient material. He found in source 1 an example which describes the various regions that were subject to pressure by the oppressors, the regions that extend from Dan in the north to the Negev in the south. At the end of the list, Zoar is mentioned separately. From the addition of *until Zoar* Applebaum determined the *terminus post quem* of the entire list. The reference to Zoar in the list is a later addition that should be dated after 106 CE, the year in which Provincia Arabia was established and the time when Zohar was included within the borders of the Roman Empire. But the entire list predates this and should be ascribed to the

³³² "ויאכל תנובות שדי—אלו ארבע מלכיות, ויניקוהו דבש מסלע ושמן מחלמיש צור אלו מציקים שהחזיקו בה בארץ-ישראל והם קשים להוציא מהם פרוטה כצור למחר הרי ישראל יורשים נכסיהם והם עריבים עליהם כשמן וכדבש. חמאת בקר אלו הפיסקים והגמונים שלהם. עם חלב כליות אלו כלירוקים שלהם. ואילים אילו קינטרונים שלהם. בני בשן, אלו בניפקרין המוציאים מבין שניהם. ועתודים אלו סינוקליטים שלהם. עם חלב כליות חטה אלו מטרינאות שלהם ודם ועינב תשתה חמר. למחר הרי ישראל יורשים נכסיהם ועריבים להם כשמן וכדבש." (ספרי, עמ' 360–359; דברים [מהדורת פינקלשטיין], translated by Reuben Hammer. In a parallel version, *Midrash Tanaiim to Deuteronomy* (Hoffman ed.), 193: "These are the בלשים who have taken possession of the Land of Israel and have driven them out of their houses, and from which it is as difficult to extract a *perutah* as from a rock."

first century CE.³³³ Another claim for the early date of the list is based by Applebaum on the fact that the oppressors could be found throughout the province, including Judaea—a description that, in his opinion, does not correspond to the agrarian situation after the Bar Kokhba revolt, when only a few Jewish farmers remained in the area of Judaea. According to him, this could only be applicable to the area of Judaea as a result of the agrarian situation after the Great Revolt.³³⁴ According to Applebaum, source 2 details the composition and identity of the oppressor ranks which included:

a. Roman army men of a low rank:

(כלירוקים) χαλκοι (קינטריונים) Centuriones (בניפיקרין) Beneficiarii.

b. Officers, senior commanders, and nobles:

(σύνταγμα) סנאטורים ומטרניאות (Senatores)

c. Jews collaborating with the Romans

Lands were handed over to these groups for absolute possession (*Optimo Iure*), and this permitted them even to sell the lands.³³⁵ The earlier date determined by Applebaum for the above sources is not certain, and in the research literature dealing with this issue, further possibilities were raised that are worth mentioning in this connection. Safrai claimed that this part may have reflected the situation during the generation of Rabi (Rabbi Judah the Prince), many years after the Second Revolt.³³⁶ Moshe Gil, on the other hand, dated the source to the fourth century and identified the oppressors mentioned in it with the Jewish notables who collaborated with the Roman authorities.³³⁷ Let us mention again the comment of Goodblatt on the dating of source 1 by Applebaum:

333 Applebaum, "Land Question," 280; See also idem, "Three Additional Remarks on the Jewish Rebellion in Cyrene under Trajan," *Zion* 22 (1967): 82. He claimed that the reference to Zohar as part of the Emperor's property proves that the list cannot be dated before the annexation of Arabia to the Roman Empire on 106 CE. According to Applebaum, Trajan continued Vespasian's land policy; he confiscated Jewish lands in Zohar and turned them over to the Mesikim. The original land owners became tenants.

334 Applebaum, "Background," 213. See also Herr (above, note 283), 293–294.

335 Applebaum, *ibid.*

336 Z. Safrai (above, note 329), 190, note 139.

337 Moshe Gil, "Land Ownership in Palestine under Roman Rule," *Revue Internationale des Droits de l'Antiquité* 17 (1970): 42; idem, "Mesiqin," *Cathedra* 105 (2003): 33–40 [in Hebrew]; idem, "Mesiqin," in *Related Worlds; Studies in Jewish and Arab Ancient and Early Medieval*

“Applebaum was forced to correct the text of *Sifre*, Deuteronomy 317; this section in which the ‘oppressors’ are mentioned refers to Zohar in terms that indicate a date after the establishment of Provincia Arabia in 106 CE. The only basis for the correction—eliminating the mention of Zohar—was his wish to date the text prior to the year 106.” In view of what was said above about the situation of the Jewish settlements in Judaea after the Second Revolt,³³⁸ I also reject the second claim of Applebaum, since the source describes the situation after the Great Revolt. As for the composition of the oppressor ranks in source 2, Goodblatt rejected the assumption of Applebaum with the claim that “in the source in which certain groups are mentioned as injuring the Jews, they are not identified at all in this section and it gives no indication that the last three groups are the ‘oppressors.’ Besides this, the ‘oppressors’ (and the ‘four kingdoms’) are mentioned in relation to another verse. In any case, there is no basis in this section for the claim that the ‘oppressors’ are identical with any one of the other groups.”³³⁹

From a review of the sources mentioned above, it is clear that there is no agreement about the details or on the question regarding the period of the Sikarikon law and the oppressors. There is also no agreement on the contents of these sources. Applebaum saw these sources as evidence for the intensive expropriation of lands in the province and the flourishing of a new social rank, the oppressors, which was injurious to the Jewish population in the province; and all this was against the background of the attempts by the Roman authorities to repress the revolt and punish the Jewish population after it.³⁴⁰

In his comprehensive study on the issue of land ownership in Palestine during the period of Roman rule, Gil argued that one should not attribute political circumstances to the question of Jewish ownership of land in general or to the Sikarikon laws and the sources describing the oppressors in particular. In his view, it would be better to deal with these sources against a socioeconomic background. Some evidence exists for the economic struggle between a patriarchal Jewish society and economic methods that are strange to it, which were represented by the Roman regime in the provinces. On this basis, Gil interprets the concept of *מציקין* (oppressors) which, in his opinion comes from the Greek (*μειστής*) meaning “officer appointed for the expropriation of mortgaged property.” Indeed, the accepted process in Roman society, that of imposing a mortgage on property through a public official or judge, was so alien to Jewish

History, by Moshe Gil (Aldershot, Hampshire, Burlington, vt.: Ashgate Variorum, 2004), ch. v.

338 Yoshua Schwartz, “Land of Judaea,” 215–221; Zeev Safrai (above, note 329), 185–192.

339 Goodblatt, “Jews of Eretz Israel,” 160; 367, note 3.

340 Applebaum, “Judaea as a Roman Province.”

halacha that echoes of the intense hatred of the oppressors described in those sources can be heard.³⁴¹ Despite the criticism by Applebaum of the interpretation given by Gil to this issue,³⁴² the very existence of another approach that does not regard the Sikarikon laws and the oppressors as the result of military and political repression seems to us to provide another level for understanding the issue in question. This is because the view of Gil does not force the researcher to look for a specific incident (or incidents) that caused the appearance of the oppressors or the application of the Sikarikon laws, but rather presents evidence of a process and continuous struggle against a socioeconomic background, as noted above.

1.4.4 *The Jewish Agrarian Situation*

If the hardship of the farmers in Judaea was the outcome of a continuous process, it is worth noting the words of Kreissig,³⁴³ with all their limitations,³⁴⁴ regarding the main causes that aggravated the situation of the Jewish farmers. In his view, there were two main factors that led to the deterioration of their situation: (1) the struggle between the owners of large estates and owners of small farms and (2) trade that began to encroach upon the farmers that led to a laxity in the observance of the social laws in the Torah (which affected mainly the farmers). To these factors, can be added two more that—in the view of Applebaum—were worth serious examination as the causes for the agrarian situation in Judaea: (3) the gradual reduction in size over the years of land areas at the disposal of the farmers and (4) the great density in population caused by population growth in Judaea in proportion to the reduced land areas.³⁴⁵

341 Gil (above, note 57), 40–44. For a different interpretation of *Mesikim*, see Francis Loftus, “The Anti-Roman Revolts of the Jews and the Galileans,” *Jewish Quarterly Review* 68 (1977/1978), 81. He claimed that the origin of the word 'מציקים' is the Latin *mesicius* [*sic*], which means a freed soldier, a veteran who settled in a colony.

342 Applebaum, “Economic Life,” 66–664; idem, “Judaea as a Roman Province,” 382.

343 See Heinz Kreissig, “Landwirtschaftliche Situation in dem Palästina vor Judäischen Krieg,” *Acta Antiqua*, 17 (1969): 223–254.

344 For an extensive critique of Kreissig's research, see Applebaum, “The Peasants' Struggle for the Land and the Great Revolt,” *Eretz Israel* 12 (1975): 125 [in Hebrew]; idem, “Economic Life,” 662–664. See also the criticism and review of I.P. Vjnberg, “Probleme der sozialökonomischen Struktur Judäas von 6 Jahrhundert v.U.Z. bis zum 1. Jahrhundert N.Z. Zu einigen wirtschaftshistorischen von Heinz Kreissig,” *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 1 (1973): 237–251.

345 Applebaum “Judaea as a Roman Province,” 373–377.

Even though some of the above claims are merely unproven assumptions, there are four possible causes—some of which are directly connected with the Roman regime in Judaea—for the worsening state of the farmers, causes that did not originate in the time of destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE. These factors testify to a prolonged process that extended over centuries and was not confined to the period between the revolts. Therefore, I do not regard the situation of the farmers in Judaea during those years as the main cause for the uprising of the Jews that led to the Bar Kokhba revolt. In my view, it does not seem reasonable to claim over and over again that the main provocation for Jewish uprising was the situation of the farmers on the eve of each revolt or incident discussed.

From available sources, it appears that the Jewish agrarian situation since the Return to Zion was generally a difficult one. Ever since the struggles between the inhabitants of Judaea and those who returned from Babylon, there were those who tried to label them as an economic confrontation³⁴⁶ and the reforms of Nehemiah certainly indicate the difficulties of the farmers.³⁴⁷ Jumping across a few centuries and arriving at the Roman period in Palestine: according to Applebaum, all the revolts of the Hasmoneans from the time of the Roman conquest until Mattathias Antigonus were supported by dissatisfied and landless farmers.³⁴⁸ Examples like the struggle of Hezekiah the Galilean in the 50s BCE,³⁴⁹ the riots that occurred in 4 BCE after the death of Herod,³⁵⁰ the rebellion in Peraea during the governorship of Cuspius Fadus (44–46 CE),³⁵¹ the founding of the Sicarii movement during the 50s CE,³⁵² and the activities of

346 Albrecht Alt, *Kleine Schriften*, zur Geschichte des Volkes Israel (München: C.H. Beck, 1953–1959), vol. II, 316–337.

347 Nehemiah, 5:2–5. See Edwin M. Yamauchi, “Two Reforms Compared: Solon of Athens and Nehemiah of Jerusalem,” in *The Bible World: Essays in Honor of Cyrus H. Gordon*, eds. Gary Rendsburg et al. (New York: Ktav Pub. House 1980): 269–292. See also Bob Becking, “Social Consciousness in the Persian period: the case of Nehemiah 5,” in *Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Construction of Early Jewish Identity*, ed. Bob Becking, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011): 74–84.

348 See *JW* 1, 153; *JA*, 14, 334; Applebaum, “Economic Life,” 637–638.

349 *John of Gischala*, see *JW*, 1, 204; *JA*, 14, 159.

350 See Eliezer Paltiel, “War in Judaea after Herod’s Death,” *Revue belge de philologie et d’histoire* 59 (1981): 107–136.

351 *JA*, 20, 2.

352 See Morton Smith, “Zealots and Sicarii,” *Harvard Theological Review* 64 (1971): 1–19. Smith argues that the Zealots were recruited from among the Jewish peasants.

John of Gischala³⁵³ were all incidents that occurred (in Applebaum's opinion) against the background of the struggle of Jewish farmers caused by the scarcity of land.³⁵⁴ The agrarian factor as the main motivation of every incident that occurred in Judaea was given too much prominence in general and as the main factor causing the outbreak of the Bar Kokhba revolt in particular. If the cause for the Great Revolt was indeed the agrarian situation of Judaeans farmers, the suppression of the revolt and its results certainly did not improve the situation of these rebel farmers. Nonetheless, proof prevails of the existence of Jewish landowners and the recovery of the agricultural economy in Judaea during the period between the two revolts.

Samuel Safrai, in his article "The Practical Implementation of the Sabbatical Year after the Destruction of the Second Temple" came to the conclusion that after the suppression of the Great Revolt, the Romans did expropriate lands, although many land areas remained in the hands of their Jewish owners. Furthermore, he concluded that "many activities from the generation of the destruction and onwards testify that the Jews sold and bought land from each other, endowed as gifts, mortgaged their lands, debtors seized the lands belonging to the borrower, prohibited selling land to gentiles, and some who sold their land bought them back, deprived the tenant farmers of their property and made use of their lands as owners in every respect."³⁵⁵ In my view, only in this context can we understand the words of Eusebius that during the Bar Kokhba revolt, the procurator Tinius Rufus expropriated lands

353 For the activities of John of Gischala, see *JW*, 4. 84–120; see also Applebaum, "Judaea as a Roman Province," 383. Critical of this interpretation is Uriel Rappaport, who argues that John was a local moderate leader who was part of an urban civic moderate milieu that had no rebellious inspiration. His main actions were aimed against non-Jewish neighbors in Upper Galilee. See Uriel Rappaport, *John of Gischala: From the Mountains of Galilee to the Walls of Jerusalem* (Jerusalem/Haifa: Merkaz Zalman Shazar; Haifa University Press, 2006), 55–97 [in Hebrew]. For research about the Sicarii, see Mark Andrew Brighton, *The Sicarii in Josephus's Judean War: Rhetorical Analysis and Historical Observation* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature 2009).

354 Applebaum, "Judaea as a Roman Province," 383–385. See also Israel Ben Shalom, *The School of Shammai and the Zealots' Struggle Against Rome* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 1983). Under the title *The Social-Economic Structure of the Low Classes*, Ben Shalom claimed that the low peasantry was the backbone of the nation! Apparently, they consolidated since the Reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah. He saw the peasantry as a major foundation of the opposition forces against the Romans and Jewish collaborators from the upper classes, which gave their actions a social character.

355 S. Safrai (above, note 317), 308–310. Safrai assumed that the Roman authorities exempted the Jewish farmers from paying taxes in a sabbatical year, in order to allow them to impose the laws of land Shemittah (p. 319). However, I disagree with this assumption.

in Judaea.³⁵⁶ Indeed, it was only towards the end of the third century, that the Amoraim in Palestine dealt with the question of whether “most of the land of Israel is in the hand of the Jews or most of the land of Israel is in the hands of the gentiles.”³⁵⁷

Rabbinical Sources

Under the title “**The Rural Tradition**,” Applebaum collected a few sources that he believed constituted evidence of who were the first to start the Second Revolt and in which areas it broke out. These traditions and legends indicate the unrest that prevailed in the agrarian society in Judaea before the Bar Kokhba revolt, from which it appears that the turmoil of the farmers led to ceaseless clashes between them and the Roman forces. It would therefore be possible to claim that the opposition to Rome, at least in its initial stages, was rooted among the rural population.³⁵⁸

The nature of the sources upon which Applebaum based his claim of the role played by Jewish farmers during the period before the Second Revolt raises difficulties: Some of those sources, even according to Applebaum, are mainly folkloristic stories.³⁵⁹ Therefore their value and reliability as historical sources must be examined in order to determine their basis in reality and whether they can be attributed at all to the Second Revolt.

I will thus review these sources and classify them into two types: (a) sources that are doubtful in regard to their dates and (b) folkloristic sources that are doubtful with regard to their historical significance.

a. Sources that are doubtful with regard to their period

1. *Talmud Yerushalmi Taanit*, IV, 8, 69a:

=There were 10,000 villages in the Royal Mountain (Har Hamelekh). R. Eleazar b. Harsum owned a thousand of them all, and, for them, a thousand ships in the sea. And all of them were destroyed³⁶⁰

356 See Eusebius, *HE*, 4, 1.

357 *TJ Demai* II, 2, 22c: “Hence Rabbi Elazar must hold that most of the land of Israel is in the hands of the gentiles and Rabbi Johanan must hold that the most of the land of Israel is in the hand of the Jews.” (Translation by Gugenheim, v. 1/2).

358 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 15–17; idem, “The Second Revolt and its Research,” 46–47. In his extensive review, he included seven sources. In his “Background,” 216–217, he omitted the passage of the *Midrash Hagadol to Sifrei Deutronomy*, 28: 52.

359 Schäfer, 136–193, Chapter 6: Der Bethar-Komplex in der Rabbinischen Literatur.

360 עשרת אלפים עיירות היו בהר המלך ולר' אלעזר בן חרסום היו אלף מהם וכנגדו היו לו אלף ספינות בים"

Most of the researchers who dealt with this source have dated it to Temple times. Luria,³⁶¹ following Klausner,³⁶² regarded the source as evidence for the generation before the destruction. Eleazar inherited his estates in the Royal Mountain from his father.³⁶³ He served in the high priesthood for 11 years: from 48 CE, when Agrippa II received the authority to appoint high priests, until 59 CE, the year in which Ishmael, son of Phiabi, was appointed.³⁶⁴ Since the high priests listed by Josephus did not include one by the name of Eleazar ben Harsum, Klausner thought he must have functioned as a deputy priest.³⁶⁵ In the discussion on various traditions about the Royal Mountain, Schäfer claimed—on the basis of the salient connection in the sources between the Royal Mountain and Jerusalem—that the destruction of this area should be linked specifically with the Great Revolt, and the very mention of Eleazar ben Harsum in the tradition about the Royal Mountain is an indication of that war of destruction.³⁶⁶

Concerning the discussion of the land situation during the Herodian period, Applebaum wrote that “there were of course, Jewish aristocrats who continued to hold large estates,” and as proof of this, he quotes the above source.³⁶⁷ And in another study, he wrote, “The merchant ships of Eleazar ben Harsum belong to the Hadrianic Epoch, but his family and his large estates go back to the pre-70 period.”³⁶⁸ However, even if we ignore the early date proposed for the source and ascribe it to the period after the destruction of the Second Temple, and if Rabbi Eleazar ben Harsum was indeed a Conductor Caesaris as Applebaum suggested,³⁶⁹ the reason for the destruction of the villages of Rabbi Eleazar and who had destroyed them is not clear. Just as a reader should not regard the second part of the source as referring to naval battles during the course of the Second Revolt, so must that reader reject the first part as evidence for the period of the Second Revolt.³⁷⁰

361 Luria, above, note 287, 62–63.

362 Joseph Klausner, *History of the Second Temple* (Jerusalem: Ahī'asaf, 1963), 21.

363 *BT*, Yoma, 35b.

364 *BT*, Yoma, 9a.

365 Klausner, above, note 362.

366 Schäfer, 183–186.

367 Applebaum, “Judaea as a Roman Province,” 367.

368 Applebaum, “Economic Life,” 644.

369 Applebaum, “Land Question,” 284, note 25.

370 See Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 24 and below 197, 212.

2. *Yerushalmi, Ta'anit* 4: 8, 68d:

It has been taught: R. Yose said, Bethar lasted for fifty-two years after the destruction of the Temple. Why was it destroyed? Because they lit lamps after the destruction of the Temple. Why did they light lamps? Because the councilors of Jerusalem would sit in the center of the city, and when they saw someone come up to Jerusalem [for a pilgrimage], they would say to him, We have heard that you want to become a magistrate (ארכינטס *archontes*) or councilor (בולבוטס). He would say to them, I intended no such thing. [they would say] We heard that you want to sell your property. He would say to them, I intend no such thing." Then an associate [of the councilors] would say to him, What do you want with this one? Write and I will sign the document. He [a councilor] would write, and the associate would sign, and they would send the [forged] deed of sale to the steward of his [the pilgrim's] house and say to him, If so-and-so comes to enter his property, do not let him because it has been sold to us. When he [the pilgrim] heard this from them, he would say, I wish I had broken my leg and not come to Jerusalem!"³⁷¹

There are two subjects interwoven in this source:

- a. The hatred that prevailed between Jerusalem and Bethar because of the attempts by the nobility of Jerusalem to dispossess them of their lands.
- b. The demand by the pilgrims from Bethar to receive the positions of magistrate and councilor. On the basis of this demand to be appointed magistrate and councilor, Alon deferred the date of the source to the beginning of the third century CE, when service in such positions had become burdensome and many people even fled from their places of residence to be

³⁷¹ "נ"ב שנה עשתה ביתר אחרי חורבן בית המקדש. ולמה חרבה? על שהדליקה נירות לאחר חורבן בית המקדש, ולמה הדליקה נירות שהיו בולוטי ירושלם יושבים באמצע המדינה. וכדו דהוון חמיי בר נש סליק לירושלם הוון אמרין ליה בגין דשמעינן עלך דאת בעי מתעבדה ארכינטס ובולבוטס. והוא אמר לון: לית בדעתי. בדיל דשמעינן עלך דאת בעי מזבנה איסייא דילך. והיא אמר לון: לית בדעתי והוה משלחין אוניתא לבר ביתיה ואמרון ליה: אין אתא פלניא מיעול לאוסייא ידידיה לא חשבקיניה, דהיא זבינה גבן. וכיוון דהוה שמע מינהון כן הוה אמר: הלוואי איתבר ריגליה דההוא גברא ולא סלק לירושלם. הדא הוא דכתיב: צדו צעדינו מלכת ברחבותינו. צדו צעדינו—אעדי אורחתיה דההוא בייתא! קרב קצינו—קרב קציה דההוא ביתא! מלאו ימינו—מלא יומיי דההוא ביתא! אוף אינון לא נפקון טבאות—שמח לאיד לא נקה"

rid of such duties.³⁷² Yet despite this late date, Alon believed that the source contained earlier traditions that reflected the social realities before the destruction of the Temple, when the Jerusalem aristocracy oppressed and abused the public.³⁷³

The interpretation of the source by Alon was adopted by Ben Shalom and Efron. Neither of them regarded the mention of the appointments for magistrate and councilor as evidence that the source described, at least in part, a historical reality suited to the beginning of the third century.³⁷⁴ Yet, in their views, such officials served in the Jerusalem Council, which was designated *the Boule*. According to them, before 70 CE, the administration of Jerusalem was conducted according to the model and style of a *polis*,³⁷⁵ so that in spite of the legendary nature of the source, it describes real historical realities that preceded the destruction of the Second Temple and concerned the hatred that prevailed between the rural population and the Jerusalem oligarchy. The source describes the crimes of the Jerusalem notables and council heads (*boule*) against pilgrims coming to Jerusalem.³⁷⁶ Applebaum, despite the difficulties he recognized in the source, claimed that it differed from the other sources that dealt with this issue, which were folkloristic. He, therefore, included it in his study among the testimonies for the Jewish agrarian situation and linked it with the outbreak of the Second Revolt.³⁷⁷

Yet how could this be possible? If in another study, Applebaum used this same source to point to the rivalry between city and village during the period before the first revolt!³⁷⁸ If we disregard the claims of Schäfer who thought that

372 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 576. See *TJ, Mo'ed Qatan*, III, 81b: R. Yohanan said, "If you were mentioned (appointed) to the Boule (City Council) let the Jordan be your border (run away to the east to the other side of the Jordan." אמר רבי יוחנן אם הזכירוך לבולי ["מועצת העיר) יהא הירדן בעל גבולך"]

373 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, p. 78, note 64.

374 Israel Ben Shalom, "The Support of the Sage for Bar Kokhba's Revolt," *Cathedra* 29 (1983), 23 [in Hebrew]; Efron, "The Bar-Kokhba War," 65–67.

375 On the existence of a *Boule* in Jerusalem during the first century CE, see Joshua Efron, "The Great Sanhedrin in Vision and Reality," in *Studies in the Hasmonean Period*, by Joshua Efron (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 287–313; Ben Shalom, above, note 94; 23, note 95. Against this assumption, see Avigdor Tcherikover, "Was Jerusalem a Greek Polis during the Procurators?," in *The Jews in the Greco Roman World*, ed. by Avigdor Tcherikover (Tel Aviv: M. Nyuman, 1964), 199–216 [in Hebrew].

376 Efron, "The Bar Kokhba War," 66.

377 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 16–17.

378 Applebaum, "Judaea as a Roman Province," 370–371.

the source was a *midrash* without historical value,³⁷⁹ and adopt the approach of the scholars we noted above, we have here a source that, despite being composed later, contains a grain of historical truth that reflects the social realities of the period of the destruction. But it does not reflect the events and realities that preceded the Bar Kokhba revolt among the rural population.

b. (Folkloristic) sources that are doubtful with regard to historical reliability.

1. *TB* Gittin 57a:

Tur Malka was destroyed because of a cock and a hen. For—It was the custom that when they would bring out the groom and the bride they would bring out a cock and a hen before them, as if to say, ‘Reproduce and multiply like chickens.’ One day a Roman troop was passing by. They took them [the cock and a hen] from them. They [the Jews] fell upon them and smote them. They went and said to the Emperor, ‘The Jews are rebelling against you.’ He came against them. There was among them [the Jews] a certain Bar Daroma, who could leap one mile, and slaughtered [many] of them. The Emperor took his crown and placed it on the ground. He said, ‘Master of the universe, may it not please you to deliver me and my kingdom into the hands of one man.’ Bar Daroma’s mouth brought about his undoing. He said, ‘But you have rejected us, O God; You do not march with our armies (Ps 60:12).’ (But David [the author of Psalms] said this too! David said it in astonishment). He [Bar Daroma] entered an outhouse. A snake came in. He dropped his gut and died.³⁸⁰

2. *TB*, Gittin, 57a–b:

Bethar was destroyed because of a shaft of a litter. For—It was the custom that when a baby boy was born they planted a cedar, and when a baby girl [was born they planted] a pine. And when they married, they

379 Schäfer, 161, 177.

380 Translation by Rubenstein, *Rabbinic Stories*, 53.

"אתרנגולא ואתרנגולתא חריב טור מלכא דהוו נהיגי כי הוו מפקי חתנא וכלתא מפקי קמייהו תרנגולא ולתרנגולתא כלומר פרו ורבו כתרנגולים. יומא חד הוה קא חליף גונדא דרומאי שקלינהו מינייהו נפלו עליהו מחונהו אתו אמרו ליה לקיסר מרדו בך יהודאי אתא עלייהו הוה בהו ההוא בר דרומא דהוה קפ"ן מילא וקטיל בהו שקליה קיסר לתאגיה ואותביה אארעא אמר ריבונה דעלמא כוליה אי נחא לך לא תמסריה לההוא גברא לדידיה ולמלכותיה" (*TB*, Gittin 57a).

cut them down and made a canopy (for the marriage ceremony. One day the daughter of the Emperor was passing through. The shaft of her litter broke. They cut down the cedar and brought it to her [litter]. They [the Jews] fell upon them and smote them. They went and said to the emperor, 'The Jews are rebelling, against you.' He came against them.³⁸¹

3. Lamentations Rabba, II, 5, 19 (TJ Ta'anot, IV, 69a):

There were two brothers in Kefar Hareva [Haruba] who did not allow any Roman to pass there, because they killed him. They said: 'The conclusion of the whole matter is that we must take Hadrian's crown and set it upon our own head.' They heard that the Romans were coming towards them; and when they set out against them, an old man met them and said: 'May the Creator be your help against them!' They retorted: 'Let him neither help nor discourage us!' Their sins immediately caused them to be slain. Their heads were brought to Hadrian, who asked: 'Who killed them?' A Cuthean replied: 'I slew him.' And the emperor ordered him to fetch their bodies. He went and found a snake encircling their necks. So Hadrian, when told of this, exclaimed: 'If their God had not slain them, who could have overcome them?' And there was applied to him the verse: *Except their rock [Kefar] had given them over.*³⁸²

The midrashic character of these three sources in which similar literary motives are interwoven, the resemblances among them, and the resemblance between them and other traditions about Bar Kokhba all present a number of questions regarding their reliability as historical sources.

Source b.1 clarifies in part the cause for the destruction of the Royal Mountain: "Through a cock and a hen Tur Malka was destroyed." It was customary to use

381 Translation by Rubenstein, *Rabbinic Stories*, 54.

אשקא דריספק חריב ביתר דהוו נהיגי כי הוה מתיליד ינוקא שתלי ארזא ינוקתא שתלי תורניתא וכי הוו מינסבי קייצי להו ועבדו גננא. יומא חד הוה קא חלפא ברתיא דקיסר אתבר שקא שדריספק קצו ארזא ועיילו לה אתו נפול עליה מחונהו אתו אמרו ליה לקיסר מרדו בך שקא שדריספק קצו ארזא ועיילו לה אתו נפול עליה מחונהו אתו אמרו ליה לקיסר מרדו בך (TB, Gittin 57a-b).

382 "שני אחין היו בכפר חרובא, ולא הון שבקין רומאי עבר תמן דאל הון קטלי יתיה. אמרו כל סמא דמילתא ניתני כלילא דאדריאנוס וניתבי בראשו של שמעון, דהא רומאי אתון מן דנפ-קין פגע בהון חד סבא. א"ל בריי בסעדכון מן אליון, אמרו ליה לא נסעוד ולא נסכיף. מיד גרמו עונות ונהרגו. ואייתאו רישיהון לגבי אדריאנוס. אמר מאן קטיל אליון. א"ל חד גונתאי אנא קטילת להון. א"ל אייתי לי פיטומיהו. אזל אשכח עכנא כריכא על צוואריהן. אמר אליו אלהון דאלין לא קטיל להון מאן הוון יכיל למיקטלינון. וקרא עליהון אם כי לא צורם מכרם" *Lamentation Rabba*, II, 5, 19 (TJ Ta'anot, IV, 69a).

these birds as a symbol of fertility during weddings, and it happened that while a wedding was being performed, the Romans came and stole the birds. This act was the signal for the uprising of the Jews in that place. In the second part of the source, Bar Daroma, a local hero who had killed many Romans, appears. He eventually failed by uttering a provocation against God, "But you have rejected us, O God; You do not march with our armies (Ps 60:12)" and found his death in an unnatural manner: "A snake came in" and "He dropped his gut and died."

Source b.2 blames the destruction of Bethar on the shaft of a litter. When a baby boy was born, it was customary to plant a cedar tree; and when a girl was born, a pine tree was planted. When a couple married, they used to cut down the trees and make a bridal canopy from them. One day the emperor's daughter was passing by and the shaft of her carriage broke, so her servants cut down another pine tree to repair the shaft. Therefore the Jews of that place rose up in rebellion and the emperor came against them to subdue them.

Source b.3 describes how two brothers from the village of Haruba clashed with the Roman authorities and took the royal crown for themselves.³⁸³ In this tradition, the words spoken by the brothers caused them to fail. Their response to the old man, who advised them that in their fight against the Romans, God would come to their assistance, was "let him neither help nor discourage us!" And they, also, died an unnatural death when a snake encircled their necks and killed them.

Some of the scholars who dealt with these sources, even though they recognized the midrashic nature of the texts, did not refrain from treating them as historical sources in every respect. Alon thought that "one should not learn... from legends," but he later argued for the existence of local rebel movements throughout Palestine before the revolt of Bar Kokhba,³⁸⁴ claiming that these three sources indicated some king-like figures, leaders of local rebellions, who should not be identified with Bar Kokhba. Their appearance before the Second Revolt seemed to resemble that of the leaders and rebels mentioned in Josephus before the revolt under Varus and the war of destruction.³⁸⁵

Abramski, was aware of the legendary character of the sources and tried to locate the historical core within these legends. Since *Hadrian* was mentioned in Source b.3, he linked this source and Source b.1 on Bar Daroma with

383 See Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 612–613; *History*, II, 35, note 89a. He read Buber's edition: "אמר כל סמא דמילתא נתי כלילא דאדריאנוס ונתיב בראשו של אלו דהא רומאי אתון" and argued that it should be read שְׁמִיעוֹן (Heard) and not שְׁמֵעוֹן (Shimeon), the name of Bar Kokhba. In opposition to this interpretation, see Yeivin, 215, note 29.

384 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 612; idem, *History*, II, 1–4.

385 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 612.

the rebellions that preceded the Bar Kokhba revolt. In his opinion, these two sources refer to local leaders who opposed Roman rule, rose up, and fought very bravely against it, guided by the ideology “Let him neither help nor discourage us,” which means activism and warfare, rather than dependence on the help of God.³⁸⁶

Yeivin dealt with source b.2 in his discussion of the question concerning the spread of the revolt beyond the area of the Judaeen hills. He identified the village of Haruba with Kefar Haruv near Sussita³⁸⁷ and claimed that it was in this part of the country that the banner of rebellion was raised. In his view, “Bands of volunteers who had prepared and trained throughout the country used from time to time to harass small units of the Roman army, especially in places far from the center, and perhaps there in an isolated village preparations were made for the declaration of the revolt and the appointment of Bar Kokhba as the head and leader of the people and the community.” According to him, the sources do not describe ordinary legends but echo the spirit that had inspired the generation, and therefore they are repeatedly told in various sources connected with the course of the revolt.³⁸⁸

Efron’s view of the sources from the Jerusalem Talmud: “One should not deduce and validate historical accounts from legends that have theological aims, with obvious exaggerations and imaginary additions, although they do contain threads of authentic memories that correspond with clear-cut testimonies.” He therefore believes that Source b.3, despite signs of editing and deficiencies, cannot be dismissed as baseless. Its aim is ideational, claiming that not only Bar Kokhba was responsible for failure and catastrophe but that the entire people shared a collective responsibility. Just as the leader of the revolt had sinned, so did the two brothers of Kefar Haruba, who represented the rebel fighters.³⁸⁹ Schäfer, after a very thorough comparison between the first part of Source b.1 and Source b.2, concludes that except for a few changes in details, both sources use the same literary structure and a similar style of folklore motifs to present the destruction of Bethar and the Royal Mountain within a historical framework. For that reason, these sources cannot be

386 Abramski, 69. “The stories are legends . . . all are integral part of the same literary motives and idiomatic phrases. They were edited by a tendentious hand to justify the failure of the revolt in Hadrian’s time with God’s decree and religious causes.”

387 Yeivin, 72–73, note 39. For a different identification of Kefar Haruba and its location in Judaea, see Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 599; Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 17, 22; Schäfer, p. 18, note 184. See also Mordechai Gichon, “The Bar Kokhba War: A Colonial Uprising Against Imperial Rome (131/2–135 CE),” *Revue Internationale d’Histoire Militaire* 42 (1979): 82–97.

388 Yeivin, 5.

389 Efron, “Bar Kokhba War,” 60.

considered historically accurate.³⁹⁰ Schäfer's position on Source b.3 (the brothers from Kefar Haruba) is the same: it is a *midrash* and lacks historical value.³⁹¹ He sees a repetition of popular literary motifs in the second part of Source b.1, and in the different traditions relating to the death of Bar Kokhba. To support his argument, he cites the following examples:

- a. Defiance against God by the protagonist of the source:

Has let Him not help nor hinder—for thou, O Lord has forsaken us.

- b. The unnatural death of the heroes of the sources:

A snake was coiled on the neck (of the brothers from Kefar Haruba [Source b.3],³⁹² or on its knees [Bar Kokhba].³⁹³

- c. Being killed by a snake who dropped his gut: (Bar Daroma).³⁹⁴

Schäfer rejected considering these sources as historical evidence for events leading to or following the Second Revolt.³⁹⁵ Efron does not consider Sources b.1 and b.2 to be historically accurate. Part of a triangular series tied to the destruction of Jerusalem in the days of Vespasian corresponds with the two sources in the Babylonian Talmud that describe the destruction of the Royal Mountain and Bethar. There is no independent authentic information in these sources. Furthermore, the authors deal with the total denial of zealous and rebellious desires in a similar literary and artistic style.³⁹⁶ According to Efron, the reason for the destruction of the Royal Mountain and Bethar, as described in the Babylonian Talmud, were marginal incidents that stem from offending local marriage customs. These were not widely accepted, were not written in the *Torah*, and therefore, were never sanctified in Israel.³⁹⁷

390 Schäfer, 178–177.

391 Ibid.

392 *Lamentations Rabba* II, 4 (Buber's ed., 51a–52b) the snake was found winding around Bar Kokhba's neck.

393 *TJ*, Ta'aniot II, 69d. The snake was found tied around Bar Kokhba's sexual organs. Efron, "Bar Kokhba War," 63, rejected this interpretation.

394 Schäfer, 171–172, 175–176.

395 Schäfer, 172, note 145.

396 Efron, "Bar Kokhba War," 72–85.

397 Efron, "Bar Kokhba War," 82; Applebaum, "Background," 385, note 78: "Needless to say that we have no information that Hadrian ever had a daughter."

There are no profound reasons, no ideational awareness, and no encouragement by the leaders of the nation for rebellion. Nor is there any popular uprising, spontaneous and revolutionary. The responsibility for the catastrophe lies on the shoulders of a few individuals. The sin lies heavily upon rash and lawless men.³⁹⁸

Another attempt to deal with the reliability of Source b.1 and b.2 was made by Yakov Gartner in a study on Tractate Ta'anit in the Jerusalem Talmud that dealt with the question of the identity of Bar Daroma in Source b.1. This indirectly negated the source as evidence relevant to the period before the revolt of Bar Kokhba since in Gartner's opinion, the *Bar Daroma* mentioned in the source was merely Bar Kokhba under another name. The Royal Mountain in the source is associated with the Bar Kokhba revolt and was destroyed during its course. Gartner came to this conclusion in view of the hostile attitude of the Babylonian Talmud towards Bar Kokhba. He thinks that the first part of Source b.1 and Source b.2 were produced by one editor on the subject of the destruction of Bethar. The second part of Source b.1 is an addition to the basic story, which was derived from a Palestinian tradition about Bar Kokhba that was transposed into the legends about the destruction of the Royal Mountain in order to blur the figure of Bar Kokhba as the hero of the battle in Bethar.³⁹⁹

We might reject the claims of those who negate the historical value of these three sources; however, at least in the case of Schäfer, careful analysis and conclusions make it very difficult to do so! But even if we do and give preference to the approach of others who found a historical echo in these sources for a period that preceded the revolt, the sources do not confirm the claims of Applebaum regarding village traditions; and they especially do not contain any evidence for uprisings on the basis of economic distress. These sources testify only to the desire of the villagers to be freed from the burden of Roman rule.

The following tale was told by R. Judan in the name of R. Aibo to prove that the name of the Messiah is Menahem.⁴⁰⁰

398 Efron, "Bar Kokhba War," 104.

399 Gartner, Yakov. *Studies in Tractate Ta'anit—Jerusalem Talmud: A Comparative Study of Parallel Sources in Talmudic and Midrashic Literature*, diss. Yeshiva University, New York 1976, 177–180. See also Yankelwitz, above, note 30, 128: "Thus we can interpret the wars at the King Mountain by Bar Daroma, namely, Bar Kokhba." Efron, "Bar Kokhba War," 103: "Ben Koziba's heroism and transposed pieces of haggada were transferred and copied to draw his clone who is Bar Daromah."

400 In the text in the TJ, R. Judan is the son of R. Aibo. However, this is a mistake and should be read: R. Judan in the name of R. Abo. See Martha Himmelfarb, "The Mother of the Messiah in the Talmud Yerushalmi and Sefer Zerubabel," in *Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture*, 111, ed. Peter Schäfer (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 2002), 370, note 6; Peter Schäfer,

4. *TJ*, Berakhot, 11, 5a:

It happened that a certain Jew was plowing one day, when his cow lowed. A certain Arab was passing by and heard the sound. 'Oh Jew! Oh Jew!' he said, 'unharness your cow and disengage your plow, for the Temple has been destroyed.' It lowed a second time. 'Oh Jew! Oh Jew!' he said, 'harness your cow and engage your plow, for the king Messiah was born.' The Jew asked, 'what is his name?' 'Menahem,' he said. 'And what is his father's name he asked?' 'Hezekiah,' he said. 'Where is he from?' he asked. 'From the royal city of Bethlehem in Judah,' he said.⁴⁰¹

This tradition describes the birth of the Messiah on the day that the Temple was destroyed in the "royal city of Bethlehem in Judaea," and in its parallel in *Lamentation Rabba*, he was born "in the capital of Araba in Bethlehem of Judah."⁴⁰² Both this fourth source and its parallel were included by Applebaum among the sources that described the connection between the agrarian situation and the Second Revolt. His claim is based on the identification of the place name in Lamentations Rabba with Qiryat Arabia mentioned in the letter from Camp B in Nahal Hever.⁴⁰³ In Applebaum's opinion, Camp B in Nahal Hever is Kefar Haruba, mentioned in Source b.3 as the place in which Bar Kokhba was declared king.⁴⁰⁴ Yadin identified Qiryat Arabia with Ein Aruv between Bethlehem and Hebron where finds were made from the period of the Second Revolt.⁴⁰⁵ Applebaum therefore argued that these sources

The Jewish Jesus: How Judaism and Christianity Shaped Each Other (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), p. 312, note 1.

401 "ודא מסייעא להו דמר ר' יודן בריה דר' אייבו עובדא הווה בחד יהודאי דהוה קאים רדי. געת תורתיה, קומוי עבר חד ערביי ושמע קלה, א"ל, בר יודאי בר יודאי שרי תורך ושרי קנקנך, דהא חריב בית מיקדשא, געת זמן תניינות, א"ל בר יודאי בר יודאי קטור תורך וקטור קנקנך דהא יליד מלכא משיחא. א"ל מה שמיה? מנחם, א"ל ומה שמיהו דאבוי? א"ל חזקיה. א"ל מן הן הוא? א"ל מן בירת מלכא דבית לחם יהודה."

Translation by Martha Himmelfarb, previous note, 370–371. Cf. Schäfer, previous note, 215–217; 313, note 8, for an extensive bibliography.

402 See *Lamentation Rabba* 1: 16:51 (Buber ed.) 89f. Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 17; idem, "Background," 217.

403 "Caves in the Judean Desert," 60–61. Mazar already noted the connection between Qiryat Arabia and the above, source.

404 Applebaum, "Background," 217; Klein, above, note 292, 214. Idem, *Sefer Hayishov*, I. Birat Malka de beth Lehem, 11–12.

405 Yadin, *Bar Kokhba*, 129–130. See Yoram Tsafrir, Boaz Zissu, "A Hiding Complex of the Second Temple Period and the Time of the Bar-Kokhba Revolt at Ain-Arrub in the Hebron

provide some evidence supporting the definition indicating the area in which the revolt broke out. Nevertheless, there is no evidence in the source for the events of the Second Revolt or for the part played in it by the farmers. The environs of Bethlehem as the birthplace for the Messiah is a recurring motif in the literature of that period,⁴⁰⁶ and one can at least learn from this fourth source about the family and dynastic connections of the Galilean rebels such as Hezekiah and Menahem.

A review of the sources that Applebaum regarded as background for the village resistance movement, which in his view was a central factor in the Second Revolt, shows, that this was not the state of affairs. Most of the sources do not indicate anything about the link between this movement and the revolt; at most, they partially reflect the great tension that prevailed in certain areas between the local population and the Roman authorities.

Although I have rejected the centrality of the agrarian factor as a cause for the Bar Kokhba revolt, I have no intention of claiming that the situation of the farmers between the two revolts was satisfactory; my main criticism is of the claim that their situation at that time was more difficult than in the years before the Great Revolt because of the expropriation of large tracts of land and the extension of the land tenancy method. We saw above that for generations, most of the lands in Judaea were privately owned by large estate holders and that the farmers cultivated them as tenants. It is therefore difficult to assume that for generations that same farming sector was the agitating and rebellious factor time after time. The background for their participation was not their personal social situation with which they had reconciled themselves for many long years and which was (more or less) stable. Evidence for this is that even the achievements of the Bar Kokhba revolt did not benefit them, and the system of land tenancy continued to exist, although with a change of owners. Thus one should not regard the Jewish agrarian situation between the revolts as the one and only factor for the outbreak of the Bar Kokhba revolt, and so the Second Revolt cannot be defined as a farmers' rebellion. We have here the permanent sociological aspect of a social situation and not a reason for specific incidents that caused the outbreak of the Second Revolt. Yet I do not exclude the possibility that farmers joined the Bar Kokhba revolt, although not for personal or social reasons. The farmers joined the revolt for the same reasons that had agitated significant sectors of the population in Judaea: the

Hills," in *The Roman and Byzantine Near East*, ed. J.H. Humphrey (Portsmouth, R.I.: *Journal of Roman Archaeology*. Supplementary Series, no. 49, 2002), vol. 3, 6–36. See *Documents from Bar Kokhba*, P. Yadin 52, 57, 58.

406 Goodblatt, "Palestinian Patriarchate," 95–96.

possible danger that had emerged for the national religious existence of some of the Jews of Palestine during the period before the Bar Kokhba revolt.

1.5 National and Religious Motives

My discussion of the events that occurred during the years 70–132 shows that the Roman regime in the period between the two revolts tended toward compromise and reaching an understanding with the Jewish population in Provincia Judaea. Nevertheless, certain exceptional incidents, such as those associated with the War of Quietus, increased the tension and even caused unrest. But generally speaking, one may define the period as a quiet one with regard to Jewish-Roman relations, a period in which the Jews could recover from the destruction of the Temple and its aftermath. Although the title of this chapter is the national and religious motives that concern internal factors within the Jewish community, the start of my discussion will be devoted to the external factors associated with the policy of Hadrian in the East in general and in Judaea in particular. The accession of this emperor in 117 CE caused a reversal in the system of relations between Jews and Romans. I will examine below whether the external factors, i.e., Hadrian's policies, had an influence on the Jewish national and religious motives for rebellion and caused the outbreak of the Bar Kokhba revolt.

1.5.1 *The Roman Position and Hadrian's Policy in the East*

The article by Schalit "The Eastern Politics of the Romans," although written about eighty years ago,⁴⁰⁷ still constitutes a foundation in the research on the subject and extensively surveys the system of relations between Rome and the East. This relationship was characterized by two possible methods of action by the Romans. The first was the conquest of the East and the realization there of a Hellenistic kingdom. This would mean the transfer of importance from the West to the East and the establishment of a world state with the countries of the East at its head and center, naturally leading to a reduction of the glory of Rome. The other was the conquest of the East and its repression by the West, headed by Rome, which would mean the establishment of Western rule over the East and the preservation of Western superiority. Both of these possibilities were destined to fail from the very start: the first, because of internal

407 Abraham Schalit, "The Eastern Politics of the Romans," *Tarbiz* 7 (1932): 159–180. [Reprinted in David Rokeah, ed., *Revolts during Trajan's Times, 115–117 CE*. (Jerusalem: Merkaz Zalman Shazar, 1978): 11–32 (in Hebrew)].

Roman reasons, the opposition of the West itself to this policy;⁴⁰⁸ the second, because of the opposition of the East. Trajan preferred the second method, to give prominence to superiority of Italy over the other provinces and over the entire East, but he personally experienced the difficulties that lay before the West in adventurism of this kind.⁴⁰⁹

The crowning of Hadrian as emperor in August 117 was marked by the failure of Trajan's Eastern policy, and Hadrian had already begun to evacuate his forces from some of the territory Trajan had conquered before he died. The first step taken by the new emperor, which indicated his foreign policy plans for the future, was to continue with the retreat from the territorial conquests of Trajan and to forgo the areas conquered and annexed to the east of the Euphrates. He withdrew from the provinces of Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria, the last two of which were annexed by the Parthians, and Armenia reverted to its former status as a client kingdom of the Romans and then of the Parthians. The border with Parthia became once again the eastern bank of the Euphrates.⁴¹⁰

Two factors guided Hadrian in making the decision to retreat from the conquests of his predecessor. One was the heavy economic burden weighing upon the Empire that resulted from the prolonged wars in the East. The other was the expected need for stationing many military forces in the East, which would endanger the status and security of Rome, mainly in Africa.⁴¹¹ In addition to these economic and political factors, the very presence of Hadrian in the East during the course of the Parthian wars and the education he received caused him to retreat from the conquests of Trajan and to abandon his general policy. Hadrian chose a different policy, mainly in the sphere of foreign affairs. He preferred to readopt the principle of Augustus and to enclose the Empire within natural borders, the Rhine, the Danube, and the Euphrates,⁴¹² or within artificial borders, such as the walls in Britain,⁴¹³ or the limes in Germany.⁴¹⁴

408 On Antonius and Nero's experiences, see *ibid.*, 177.

409 For Trajan's Parthian policy and the Parthian wars, see *ibid.*, 178–179. See also Kenneth H. Waters, "The Reign of Trajan and Its Place in Contemporary Scholarship," *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* 11, 2 (1975): 415–428.

410 *Historia Augusta*, *Hadrian*, 5, 3; 9, 1. It looks like the emperor planned to withdraw even from Dacia.

411 See Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 432–433.

412 Tacitus, *Annals*, 1, 11, 7.

413 *Historia Augusta*, *Hadrian*, 3, 11.

414 *Ibid.*, 12, 6. For a summary of Hadrian's border policy, see Eric Birley, "Hadrianic Frontier Policy," in *The Roman Army Papers 1929–1986*, (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1988) [= in Eric Swoboda, ed. *Carnuntina*, Ergebnisse der Forschung über die Grenzprovinzen des römischen Reiches (Graz/Köln H. Böhlau Nachf., 1956), 25–33].

The failure of Trajan's policy and the reentrenchment within the former borders of the Empire raised once again the question of the triangulated system of relationships—of the emperor, Italy, and the Roman provinces—in general and the question of the eastern border provinces (Syria, Judaea, and Arabia) because of their proximity to those “burning” borders. The way in which Hadrian coped with these questions and the solutions that he found for them in his relations with the eastern provinces require an examination of the emperor's policy in the various economic, social, and religious spheres which he encountered within the provinces.

Thornton, who reviewed the period of Hadrian's rule,⁴¹⁵ stated that the emperor's policy centered upon the unification of the Empire. He saw the Empire as a single entity, in the center of which stood the figure of the Caesar, and all the spheres of his activities were aimed at achieving this goal.⁴¹⁶ In order to do so, Hadrian adopted two methods of action that seemed contradictory to each other. But the greatness of Hadrian was his ability to reconcile and compromise between the two in order to promote the idea of a unified Empire. On one hand, Hadrian acted as a traditionally conservative emperor and revived some of the methods used by Augustus (e.g., the matter of borders mentioned above) to preserve the position of Italy and Rome as an Empire. On the other hand, he made changes and introduced innovations in the political, economic, religious, and social spheres in order to strengthen the links among the various components of the Empire as a whole.⁴¹⁷

The main innovation of Hadrian was related to his policy towards the provinces. His all-embracing view of the Empire made it necessary to stress the importance, function, and place of the provinces within the imperial system and his own function in the process of unifying the Empire and its subjects.⁴¹⁸ The provinces in general—and the Hellenistic foundations in the Eastern provinces in particular—played a central role in the unity of the Empire. For generations, the Roman Empire had regarded Hellenistic foundations as a faithful ally.⁴¹⁹ Besides this, Hadrian was known to have been a Hellenist from

⁴¹⁵ Thornton, 432–476.

⁴¹⁶ See Rufus. J. Fears, “The Cult of Jupiter and Roman Imperial Ideology,” *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt*. II, 17/1 (1981): 89.

⁴¹⁷ Albino Garzetti, *From Tiberius to the Antonines: A History of The Roman Empire AD 14–192*, trans. J.R. Foster (London: Methuen, 1974), 431.

⁴¹⁸ See Willem den Boer, “Religion and Literature in Hadrian's Policy,” in *EYTPAMMATA: Studies in Graeco-Roman History*, eds. Harry Willy Pleket, Hendric S. Versnel, Marinus Antony Wes (Leiden: Brill 1979) [= *Mnemosyne*, 8 (1969), 123–144], 202.

⁴¹⁹ For the reasons behind Hadrian's preference of the Hellenistic elements, see Applebaum, “Second Revolt,” 41.

his early youth, and he received the title of *Graeculus* through the education he had received.⁴²⁰ The Hellenistic basis in the eastern part of the Empire became one of the central instruments in Hadrian's plan to strengthen the Roman Empire. This role of the provinces, mainly the eastern ones, gave them greater preference in Hadrian's ruling system, and they received unlimited support in economic, religious, and social spheres.⁴²¹

This support was given prominence mainly through Hadrian's travels throughout the Empire. His frequent visits in the provinces provided him with the political means to realize his aspirations for the unity of the Empire. Indeed, Hadrian spent twelve years out of the twenty-one years of his rule in such journeys.⁴²² His visits to the provinces emphasized their importance for the Roman Empire and the importance of their recognition of the emperor as the symbol of its unity. His frequent appearances in Greece and in Asia Minor—and the building enterprises and development that they generated—testify to his desire to strengthen the basic Hellenistic elements in the provinces, and through them, to tighten the bond between him and the Empire. Hadrian initiated many building projects and much urban development in order to obtain the support and loyalty of his subjects in Greece and Asia Minor.⁴²³ Among other things, he was granted the title of *Restitutor Achaiae*,⁴²⁴ inscribed on coins in various places in Asia Minor and Greece: *κτιστης οικστης*,⁴²⁵ a title that indicates the great esteem that the citizens of the East felt toward the

420 On the nickname, see *Historia Augusta, Hadrian*, 5, 1.

421 Dio Cassius, 59, 2f.

422 *Historia Augusta, Hadrian*, 17, 8 On Hadrian's travels see Zvi Yavetz, "Hadrian the Traveler," in *Ben Zion Katz Memorial Volume*, Studies in the Classical Culture, eds. Marc Rozelaar, Ben Zion Shimron (Tel Aviv: Mif'al ha-shikhpu, 1970): 67–77 (in Hebrew). Idem. *Caesar and Caesarism; Essays in Roman History* (Tel Aviv: Sifriyat Po'alim, 1971), 187–199 [in Hebrew]. See also Benario, 147–149, with a bibliography for the travels; Ronald Syme, "Journey of Hadrian," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 73 (1987): 159–170; Birley, *Hadrian*. Idem, "Hadrian's Travels," in *The Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power*, Proceedings of the Third Workshop of the International Network 'Impact of Empire' (Roman Empire, c. 200 BC–AD 476), Netherlands Institute in Rome, March 20–23, 2002, eds. Lukas de Blois et al. (Amsterdam Gieben, 2003), 425–441.

423 On the urbanization and building projects in Asia Minor during Hadrian's period, see David Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor to the End of the Third Century after Christ* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950), Ch. xxiv: Peace and Unification under Hadrian, 611–129, notes on 1460–1490. See also Mary T. Boatwright, *Hadrian and the Cites of the Roman Empire*, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2000).

424 Harold Mattingly, Edward Allen Sydenham, *Roman Imperial Coins* (London: Spink, 1926), II, 337, note 321.

425 For Hadrian's title, see Louis Perret, *La titulature impériale d'Hadrian* (Paris: E. De Boccard, 1929), 92–94.

emperor. Hadrian's religious policy, which found expression in a number of important enterprises and reveals the personality and character of the emperor, held an honorable place among his prominent innovations. Recognition of this will assist us in understanding its influence on his relations with the Jews in general and the situation on the eve of the Second Revolt in particular. Hadrian's policy in the religious sphere was also meant to serve the aims of Empire unification. The various divinities were regarded by the emperor as a unifying political tool and were used as such.⁴²⁶ Hadrian persuaded the Romans that he preferred the traditional cult and loathed the religions of the East,⁴²⁷ but his words were merely lip service for the Roman population.⁴²⁸ In actuality, Hellenistic cults and Eastern religions were not repugnant to him, even though his attitude was based on political motives.⁴²⁹ Den-Boer, in his discussion of the religious policy of Hadrian, noted that his aspirations for unity led him to include all the gods of Eastern religions within the Roman pantheon.⁴³⁰ This policy makes it clear why Hadrian gave special support to the cult of Jupiter in Rome. Jupiter was the divinity that resembled and was identified with the Greek divinity Zeus. Hadrian therefore saw this god as a universal divinity that could serve his political aims in unifying the Empire.⁴³¹ The centrality of Athens in the policy of Hadrian is evident from his three visits to the city that brought about its economic,⁴³² cultural, and religious florescence.⁴³³ As early as during his first visit to Athens in 124/125 CE, the emperor had conceived the idea of Panhellenism, which had a double purpose: to

426 See the abstract of Margherita Guarducci, "La Religione di Adriano," *Actes du colloque international sur les empereurs romains d'Espagne*, Organisé à Madrid du 31 Mars au Avril 1964 par Andre Piganiol & H. Terrasse (Paris: 1965), 209; Benjamin Isaac, "Roman Religious Policy and the Bar Kokhba War," *Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered*, 37–54.

427 *Historia Augusta, Hadrian*, 22, 10.

428 Thornton, 443–444.

429 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 4.

430 den Boer (above, note 418), 128; and see *Historia Augusta, Hadrian*, 19, 10.

431 Thornton, 455–459.

432 For the economic flourishing of Athens during the days of Hadrian, and for the municipal beneficent projects in the city, see John Day, *An Economic History of Athens under Roman Domination* (New York: Arno Press, 1942), 183–197; Daniel J.J. Geagan, "Roman Athens: Some Aspects of Life and Culture. I. 86 BC–AD. 267," *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, 11 7/1 (1979): 388–399, 426–430; Theodore Leslie Shear, "Athens: From City-State to Provincial Town," *Hesperia*, 50 (1981): 372–377; Mary Taliaferro Boatwright, *Hadrian and the Cities of the Roman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Anthony J.S. Spawforth, *Greece and the Augustan Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), ch. 6: "Hadrian and the Legacy of Augustus," 233–270.

433 See Bettie Forte, *Rome and the Romans as the Greeks Saw Them* (Rome: American Academy in Rome, 1972), 291–298.

unify the Greek cities throughout the Empire and to unify and strengthen the Empire.⁴³⁴ This idea was merged with the emperor cult that Hadrian fostered, in which the Caesar became the unifying symbol for all the different parts of the Empire. The deifying reverence shown toward the emperor as a result of this cult reached its height in the visit of 132/133 CE to Athens, when he completed the erection of the Temple to Zeus Olympius,⁴³⁵ assumed the title *Olympius*,⁴³⁶ and founded the Panhellenion, the alliance of all the Hellenic cities.⁴³⁷ The image of Hadrian was exhibited in the Temple of Zeus Olympius, and near the altar of Zeus, stood an altar in honor of the Caesar. Many cities throughout the Greek world dedicated statues to Hadrian Olympius.⁴³⁸ Benjamin, in her research on the altars that were dedicated to Hadrian, came to the conclusion that the titles of *Olympius* and *Zeus Olympius* assigned to Hadrian served and lay stress upon his Panhellenic program.⁴³⁹ The emperor cult was the embodiment of Zeus Olympius on earth and served as an instrument for the unification and strengthening of the Roman Empire. The cult of the ruler became the central element in state religion, not only for the Greeks but for all the peoples of Asia Minor.⁴⁴⁰

434 On the Panhellenion, see Marcus Niebuhr Tod, "Greek Inscriptions from Macedonica," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 42 (1922): 167–180; Jean Beaufeu, *La religion romaine à l'apogée de l'empire* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres 1955), 184–186; Bernard D'Orgeval, *L'empereur Hadrien oeuvre législative et administrative*, (Paris: Domat Montchrestien 1950), 244–247. For an extensive summary about the functions and goals of the Panhellenion from the point of view of the Romans and the Greek world, see James Henry Oliver, *Marcus Aurelius: Aspects of Civic and Cultural Policy in the East* (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1970), 130–137.

435 *Historia Augusta, Hadrian*, 13, 7 and see Benario, 95–96.

436 On this title, in Cysicus see William E. Metcalf, "Hadrian, Iovis Olympius," *Mnemosyne* 27 (1974): 59–66. Hadrian as Zeus, see inscriptions from Ephesus: H. Helmut Engelmann, Dieter Knibbe, "Aus Ephesischen Skizzenbüchern," *Jahrshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Institutes in Wien* 52 (1979–80): 31–32. See also C. Christoph Börker, et al. eds. *Die Inschriften von Ephesos*, 11, 101–599. In inscriptions A267,–271 Hadrian is mentioned as *Zeus Olympius*.

437 Rubina Raja, *Urban Development and Regional Identity in the Eastern Roman Provinces, 50 BC–AD 250*, Aphrodisias, Ephesus, Athens Gerasa (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum, 2012), Ch. 4, Athens, 91–136; Athens in the Hadrianic Period, 120–126. See above, note 28, and Paul Graidor, *Athens sous Hadrien*, (Caire: Arno Press 1934), 52–53; 102–111.

438 *Historia Augusta, Hadrian*, 13, 6; Cassius Dio, 59, 16, 1, 2; Pausanias, 1, 18, 6.

439 Anna S. Benjamin, "The Altars of Hadrian in Athens and Hadrian's Panhellenic Program," *Hesperia* 32 (1963): 57–86.

440 Den Boer, above, note 418, 207–208. He reviewed the phases of the development of the emperor's cult during Hadrian's reign. I will mention examples of cults adapted by Den

To sum up the new religious ideology that developed in Rome, I will quote Fears on this subject: "It centered upon the image of the Emperor as the divinely elected vicegerent of Jupiter-Zeus who fulfils the earthly function of Jesus and serves as the mediator between man and the common father of the human race."⁴⁴¹

1.5.2 *Hadrian and the Jews*

Hadrian came to know the Jewish people during the revolt in the Diaspora,⁴⁴² in his position as the Governor of Syria and through his participation in the final stages of the Parthian wars. This knowledge must have certainly implanted prejudiced opinions in his mind toward the Jews. He was also personally responsible for the suppression of Jewish uprising⁴⁴³ throughout the Empire⁴⁴⁴ in Mesopotamia, Cyrene, Egypt, Palestine,⁴⁴⁵ and Cyprus, and regarded the event as one of the main factors for the failure of the Romans in the war against the Parthians. He also participated in the rehabilitation activities in Cyrene,⁴⁴⁶ and in Egypt⁴⁴⁷ after the Diaspora revolt and witnessed the extent of destruction that the Jews, among others, had caused.⁴⁴⁸

In view of all this, Applebaum came to the conclusion that "the impression that our people made on Hadrian was therefore as one with the tendency to

Boer, for example, the adoption of the Helioid cult in Klazomenai (*IGR* 4. 1551) and the Dionysius cult at Akmonia, (*IGR* 4.640). On the Zeus Eleutherios cult and Hadrian, see Antony Erich Raubitschek, "Hadrian as the Son of Zeus Eleutherios," *American Journal of Archaeology* 49 (1945): 331–382.

441 See Fears, above, note 10, 39.

442 *Historia Augusta, Hadrian*, 6, 4; Cassius Dio, 68, 33.

443 Cassius Dio, 68, 32; See Shimeon Applebaum, *Jews and Greeks in Ancient Cyrene* (Leiden: Brill 1979), 261–264; Smallwood, 412–415.

444 See Schalit, above, note 1, 178–180.

445 On the events in Eretz Israel during the Diaspora rebellion, see Smallwood, 421–427. Against her interpretation, see Schürer, 533–534. For detailed studies, see Miriam Pucci Ben Zeev research on the Polemos. Idem, "Il movimento insurrezionale in Guidea (117–118 A.C.)," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 4 (1978): 63–76. Idem, "The Revolt during Trajan Revolt," *Judaea and Rome*, 185–204 [in Hebrew]; idem, *Diaspora Judaism in Turmoil, 116/117 CE, Ancient Sources and Modern Insights* (Leiden, Brill, 2005); idem, "The Uprisings in the Jewish Diaspora, 116–117," *The Cambridge History of Judaism* IV (2006), 93–104. More recently, Anna Maria Schwemer, "Der jüdische Aufstand in der Diaspora unter Trajan (115–117 n.Chr.)." *Biblische Notizen* 148 (2011): 85–100.

446 Orosius, *Historiae Adversus Paganos*, 7, 12. For evidence on the restoration activities in Cyrene, see Applebaum (above, note 163), Second appendix: A Collection of Inscriptions.

447 Eusebius, *Chronicon* (Helm ed.), 197.

448 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 4.

revolt and endanger the sensitive eastern border. Besides this, both his Roman outlook and education made him indifferent and even hostile to the religions of the East, and as said above, to Judaism in particular.”⁴⁴⁹ Applebaum’s conclusion fits in with the research trends of that time that focused interest on the actions of Hadrian from the Jewish viewpoint. In the view of scholars of that trend, the policy of the emperor was from the very outset a deliberately anti-Jewish one. They therefore classify the behaviors of the emperor according to the pro-Jewish and anti-Jewish measures he adopted.⁴⁵⁰ I contend that he crafted his general policy to serve the good of the Empire and of Provincia Judaea as a part of that empire.

I will continue by an examination of the activities of Hadrian in Palestine and his attitude toward the Jews until the outbreak of the revolt in order to determine whether they can be regarded as a deliberately anti-Jewish policy. A few scholars have interpreted some of Hadrian’s activities in Judaea and his attitude towards the Jews at the beginning of his reign against the background of the Diaspora revolt and its outcome. In their view, these indicate the attempt of the emperor to compromise with the Jews of Palestine and to reach an understanding with them.

As a result of the change in the status of Judaea into a consular province during the governorship of Lusius Quietus,⁴⁵¹ the guard forces in Judaea were strengthened by the addition of a second legion to the Tenth Legion Fretensis

449 Applebaum, “Second Revolt,” 43; idem, *Prolegomena*, 5. Applebaum (above, note 203), 264, pointed out that Trajan had a similar impression about the Jews.

450 See Schäfer, 236–244. He discusses the sources that describe the positive image of Hadrian. See also Stemberger’s research; he analyzed the Rabbinic source according to its approach to the emperor’s figure: Günter Stemberger, “Die Beurteilung Roms in der Rabbinischen Literatur,” *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* 11, 19/2 (1979): 361–364; idem, *Die römische Herrschaft im Urteil der Juden* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1983), 78–86.

451 *Historia Augusta, Hadrian*, 14, 1; Cassius Dio, 69, 12, 4. See Ronald Syme, “The Wrong Marcian Turbo,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 52 (1962): 90, note 39. He argued that, according to the *Historia Augusta*, Hadrian planned to reorganize the region by separating Phoenicia from Syria and annexing it to Judaea in order to establish a new province: Provincia Syria Palaestina. See Benario, 89, who rejected this interpretation. Hadrian never had such a plan. The emperor visited Antioch three times, where he founded building projects and water supply systems for the city. See Glanville Downey, *Ancient Antioch* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 99–101. According to Downey, the evidence in the *Historia Augusta* is anachronistic. It was only in 195 CE, following Pescenius Niger’s victory, that the province was divided into two: Coele-Syria and Phoenicia Syria. See also Yeivin, 58, who linked the source to Hadrian’s visit to Antioch at 129–130, and following the events in the city, he separated Phoenicia from Syria.

already stationed there.⁴⁵² This additional legion can be seen as a tightening of the belt around the Jewish population in Judaea after the Diaspora Revolt and the War of Quietus.⁴⁵³ However, could not the stationing of the additional legion merely be part of the overall plan of Hadrian to strengthen the range of forces in the eastern provinces after his retreat to the west bank of the Euphrates? In my opinion, the stationing of the second legion in the northern part of Provincia Judaea conformed to the policy of the emperor to divide the burden among the various provinces. The location of the camp of the second legion specifically in the Jezreel Valley in Caparcotna/Legio and the development of a road network from and to it,⁴⁵⁴ indicate this intention, that is to say, to be able to transfer legions within a short time and with greater efficiency from one danger area to another. In the case under discussion, there

452 McElderry had already stated in 1908 that Lusius Quietus, the governor of Judaea, had a consular rank in 117 CE. See Knox R. McElderry, "The Second Legionary Camp in Palestine," *Classical Quarterly* 2 (1908): 110–113; 3 (1909): 59. However, the question of the date of changing the status of the province to a consular one, and the addition of a second legion to the garrison, came up following the research of Prof. Baruch Lifshitz, "Sur la date du Transfert de la legio VI Ferrata en Palestine," *Latomus* 19 (1960): 109–111. He referred to the fact that Tineius Rufus already had a consular rank in 127. He also hinted at the epigraphic evidence mentioning the stationing of the VI Ferrata in 130 before the Second Revolt. Following the Lifshitz article, a few more articles were devoted to the question of the stationing of the second legion in Judaea. Keppie, who reviewed the movements of the legions in the East in the years 135–170, concluded that the second legion stationed in Judaea since 117 was the Legio II Traiana. See Lawrence J.F. Keppie, "The Legionary Garrison of Judea under Hadrian," in *Legions and Veterans*, Roman Army Papers 1971–2000 (Stuttgart: F. Steiner 2000): 219–224 [= *Latomus* 32 (1973): 859–864]. Roll and Isaac, on the basis of evidence from a milestone, argued for the presence of the Legio II Traiana in 120 CE. See Benjamin Isaac, Israel Roll, "Judaea in the Early Years of Hadrian Reign," 182–197; idem, "Legio II Traiana in Judaea," 198–207. Against the reading of the above milestone, see John R. Rea, "The Legio II Traiana in Judaea?," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 38 (1980): 220–221. For Isaac and Roll's reply to the critique, see Benjamin Isaac, Israel Roll, "Legio II Traiana in Judaea—A Reply" *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 47 (1982): 131–132; Pl. XI b+c [=, 182–197]. See also Rado Urloiu, "Legio II Traiana Fortis Sili Iudea În Timpul Lui Hadrianus," *Cogito* 2 (2010): 120–138 (in Rumanian). For an English translation, see "II Traiana Fortis and Judaea under Hadrian's Reign," <http://cogito.ucdc.ro/n4e/LEGIO-II-TRAIANA-FORTIS-AND-JUDAEA-UNDER-HADRIAN-REIGN.pdf>; See also David L. Kennedy, "Legio VI Ferrata: The Annexation and Early Garrison of Arabia," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 84 (1980): 283–308.

453 See Isaac and Roll, "Judaea in the Early Years of Hadrian's Reign," 187, 191–192.

454 Ibid., 192, and the map. See also Albert, Brian Bosworth, "Vespasian's Reorganization of the North East Frontier," *Antichthon* 10 (1976): 63. He compares Hadrian's actions in Judaea with Vespasian's organization of the eastern borders.

was another aim, which was to prevent the concentration of four legions in one province, in Provincia Syria. A large military force under the command of the governor of Syria could constitute a real danger to the rule of the emperor. How real this danger was is evidenced by the removal of Lusius Quietus from his position in Palestine, as described by Spartianus: "He deprived Lusius Quietus of the command of the Moorish tribesmen, who were serving under him, and then dismissed him from the army, because he had fallen under the suspicion of having designs on the throne."⁴⁵⁵

The dismissal of Quietus from his position as governor of the province and the appointment of Lucius Cossonius,⁴⁵⁶ can be interpreted as a gesture of good will by Hadrian towards his subjects in Judaea. Quietus had been appointed as the governor of Judaea by Trajan as a reward for his suppression of the Jewish revolt in Mesopotamia, which was carried out by a cruel massacre of the Jews of that country.⁴⁵⁷ Even before Hadrian's return to Rome in July 118 CE, the Senate ordered the execution of four senators (Lusius Quietus, Cornelius Palma, L. Publius Celsus, and C. Avidius Nigrinus) who were suspected of subversive activities against the emperor.⁴⁵⁸ The removal of Quietus and his execution after some time served the policy of Hadrian mentioned above to return to the natural borders of the Empire.⁴⁵⁹ Perhaps Quietus, who had been one of the senior commanders of Trajan and had gained his glory through Trajan's policy of conquest, headed the opposition faction that aspired to return to the expansionist policy of Hadrian's predecessor.⁴⁶⁰ Thus, we cannot link this with any Jewish concerns.

The intervention of Hadrian in the conflict that broke out between the Jews and the Greeks in Alexandria and his decision in favor of the Jews⁴⁶¹ can be

455 *Historia Augusta, Hadrian*, 5, 8.

456 Hannah M. Cotton, Werner Eck, "Governors and Their Personnel on Latin Inscriptions from Caesarea Maritima," *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities* 7, 7 (2001): 215–240; See *Année Épigraphique* 2003, 1801; *Caesarea and the Middle Coast*, 159–160, no. 1227.

457 See above, note 445.

458 *Historia Augusta, Hadrian*, 6, 8, 7; Cassius Dio, 59, 2, 5 See Benario, 65, 71–72.

459 See above 106.

460 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 434–435; see David Golan, *Scriptores Historiae Augustae, vita Hadriani* (Jerusalem: Akademon, 1989), 14 [in Hebrew].

461 See Victor Tcherikover, Aleander Fuks, *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press 1964), 11, no. 158, 435; For the dates of the papyri, see Marina Pucci, "Alexandria ad Aegyptum: 117–119," *Scripta Calassica Israelica* 5 (1979/80): 195–205.

interpreted as an attempt to conciliate the Jews of Alexandria.⁴⁶² But there is no doubt that the very involvement of Hadrian in the dispute was, consistent with the peace policy he had adopted, intended to calm the spirits in Alexandria after years of riots and struggles in the city.⁴⁶³

The establishment of Aelia Capitolina as a second colony in Judaea, which I will deal with in detail later on, was also interpreted by Isaac in his article on the Roman colonies in Judaea as part of the general policy of the emperor. He noted that ever since the time of Trajan, the Romans in the outlying provinces in Europe had sought to match the number of settlements in the province to the number of legions stationed in it. This principle was observed in Syria as well, although the number of settlements there amounted to three before the period of Trajan.⁴⁶⁴ In view of this principle, it was clear in Isaac's opinion that Hadrian intended to rebuild Jerusalem. He wanted to restore the city and turn it into a second Roman colony in the territory of Palestine, and he favored Jerusalem since the Legion x Fretensis was encamped there.

However, the crowning factor in Hadrian's intentions and activities for the good of the Jews when he rose to power was, according to various scholars, his promise to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. From the story in *Midrash Genesis Rabba* 64:29, this plan was cancelled because of the intrigues of the Samaritans, and its cancellation almost led to a Jewish rebellion against Hadrian. The source was subjected to many criticisms, mainly with regard to the question of its dating, value, and historical reliability.⁴⁶⁵ Alon, after his review of the various sources and traditions associated with the rebuilding of the Temple and the restoration of Jerusalem, came to the conclusion that "Hadrian true to his chosen role as Restitutor of the war-ravaged lands in the East; bearing the Jews no malice, and at the same time anxious to strengthen,

462 Herr, "Causes," 4, note 15. It is possible that this was the understanding by Alexandrian Jews of Hadrian's decision, probably presented in the *Fifth Sibylline*, 46–50, which praises Hadrian and attributes messianic hopes to him. This kind of description suits the years from 117, the end of the Diaspora revolt till 130, before the Second Revolt. For the possible dates of the Fifth Sibylline, see John J. Collins, *The Sibylline Oracles of Egyptian Judaism* (Missoula Mont. Scholars Press, 1974), 75, 94–95.

463 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 397–405.

464 Isaac, "Roman Colonies in Judaea. The Foundation of Aelia Capitolina," in *Near East Under Roman Rule*, 87–108 postscript.

465 *Midrash Genesis Rabba*, 64:29. For a detailed review, see below the chapter about the Samaritans' participation in the revolt, 363–384. And in my book, Menahem Mor, *From Samaria to Shechem: The Samaritan Community in Antiquity*, (Jerusalem: Shazar Center 2003), 172–175 [in Hebrew].

both demographically and economically all countries facing the border with Parthia—decided to restore Jerusalem.”⁴⁶⁶ On this issue, in Alon’s opinion, we can see another attempt by Hadrian to include Provincia Judaea within the overall scheme of the eastern provinces, with all that this implied.⁴⁶⁷

Recently, a number of scholars have dated the source *Genesis Rabba* to the year 117 CE, the beginning of the reign of Hadrian and linked it with the first journey of the emperor to the East. Boyarin suggested that in an examination of how the emperors are presented in rabbinical sources, it should be remembered that the presentation is based on the estimated relationship between the imperial authorities and the Jewish people. Bazzana’s discussion of the account of rabbinical sources of the connection between Hadrian’s religious policy and the Bar Kokhba Revolt is consistent with Boyarin’s suggestion, and it deals anew with the various reasons for the outbreak of the Second Revolt. In the context of Boyarin’s suggestion, Emperor Nero, for example, is presented in a positive light, while Titus is described negatively. Surprisingly enough, the figure of Hadrian is portrayed ambiguously. Although the sources are from the fourth century CE, and in spite of the cliché that is associated with the Samaritans, Boyarin thought that the source has a historical basis and contains information about Roman acceptance of the Jewish cult through the agreement to rebuild their sanctuary.⁴⁶⁸

Livia Capponi, basing on Talmudic sources including the *midrash* under consideration and the testimony of Epiphanius of Salamis, tried to strengthen the reliability of the fact that the construction of Aelia Capitolina and the project of rebuilding the Temple had already begun in 117 CE. In her opinion: “The renaming of Jerusalem and the planned reconstruction of the Temple may have been a way to quell the Diaspora revolt for good by targeting the symbol of Judaism for the Jewish communities throughout the world.”⁴⁶⁹ Yehoshua

466 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 458; Schäfer, 29–32; idem, “Causes,” 75–79.

467 See William D. Gray, “The Founding of Aelia Capitolina and the Chronology of the Jewish War under Hadrian,” *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 39 (1923): 248–256. He dated the building of Aelia Capitolina to the year 117 CE, during Hadrian’s first visit to Eretz Israel. It was built as a civic and a military center against the local and the Jewish Diaspora population that had revolted against him. The building was stopped after he left the region.

468 Giovanni Battista Bazzana, “The Bar Kokhba Revolt and Hadrian’s Religious Policy,” in *Hadrian and the Christians*, ed. M. Marco Rizzi (Berlin De Gruyter, 2010): 102–109. On page 99, he refers to the work of Daniel Boyarin, *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

469 Livia Capponi, “Hadrian in Jerusalem and Alexandria in 117,” *Athenaeum* (2010): 489–501.

Peleg, in his study on the dating of the event “for the Redemption of Israel,” thought, in connection with the source in the *midrash*, that when Hadrian first visited Judaea in 118 CE, he “demanded that the Jews rebuild the Temple and agreed with them over the rehabilitation of Jerusalem and the sanctuary.” He linked the source with the testimony of Epiphanius of Salamis and Barnabas, which he believes describe the restoration of Jerusalem as a Jewish city and the construction of the sanctuary. In his opinion, Bar Kokhba was announced that year as the Prince of Israel, and until the year 130 CE acted in cooperation with the Roman regime.⁴⁷⁰

The time schedule described above is extremely problematic. The establishment of Aelia Capitolina is an incontrovertible fact, whether it was done in 117 or 130 CE or later after the suppression of the revolt in 135/136 CE. But the question is what happened with Hadrian’s demand that the Jews should restore their sanctuary? Did they not respond to such a request? An additional question is linked to another chronological difficulty: Why did it take the Jews fourteen years to rebel? What happened between 117 and 130 CE? If Hadrian reconsidered his promise to erect the Temple, why did the Jews not revolt immediately but rather, according to Peleg, cooperated with the Romans until 130 CE?

Renan Baker, in an article on the subject of Hadrian’s visit to the East and the restoration of Jerusalem in accordance with what Epiphanius said in his work *On Weights and Measures*, rejected the possibility of the early date of 117/118 CE as the time for the first visit of Hadrian in the region. In his view, Epiphanius was referring to the visit of the emperor in 129/130 CE in the East and in Provincia Judaea. Therefore the source in the *midrash* should not be linked with the readiness of Hadrian to build the Temple in Jerusalem, neither at the early date nor at the later one. In his opinion, the *midrash* makes no reference to the emperor, and in the testimony of Epiphanius there is only the intention of the emperor to rebuild the city but not the Temple in Jerusalem.⁴⁷¹

470 Yehoshua Peleg, “On the Date of ‘the Redemption of Israel’ in the Documents of the Judaeae Desert,” *New Studies on Jerusalem* 17 (2011): 369–383 [in Hebrew].

471 Renan Baker, “Epiphanius, on Weights and Measures §14: Hadrian’s Journey to the East and the Rebuilding of Jerusalem,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 182 (2012): 157–167. I will review these sources extensively when dealing with the role of Jerusalem during the revolt.

Since we have rejected the historical value of the source in *Midrash Genesis Rabba*,⁴⁷² we have no evidence of a promise by the emperor to restore the Temple. Therefore, there is no need to search for reasons to explain the promise's rejection or the Temple's nonconstruction. The source also contains no reference to the presumed storm that was aroused when it became clear that the emperor had no intention to rebuild Jerusalem as a Jewish city and that the Jewish Temple was not part of the plan to rehabilitate the city. No echo of such a storm can be heard in the above source.⁴⁷³

Other activities of Hadrian in Palestine can be understood in the framework of his policy to strengthen the Hellenistic elements in the Empire. Evidence can be found of attempts by the emperor to reinforce the Hellenistic elements in the Galilee, such as the transfer of the local government in Tiberias and Sepphoris to gentile authorities.⁴⁷⁴ Already in 130 CE, Sepphoris had been renamed *Diocaesarea* in honor of the Caesar;⁴⁷⁵ and a *Hadrianeum* was built in Tiberias and in Caesarea.⁴⁷⁶ On a coin from Tiberias dated to the year 119/120 CE, the image of the Caesar is engraved on one side and a Temple of Zeus on the other. This seems consistent with the world outlook of Hadrian that guided his policy in the East in general and in Judaea in particular. This policy was meant to turn the eastern provinces into an integral part of the Empire,

472 See Schäfer, 29–32. He suggested that if the source has any historical value, it should be dated to Trajan's reign.

473 Herr, "Causes," 4–5. Herr assumed that the delay of the plan to rebuild the Temple stems from the disagreements between the Jews and Hadrian about the character of the reconstructed Temple in Jerusalem. The Jews opposed a temple that would allow its cult to be open to gentiles.

474 See Arnold H.M. Jones, *The Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces*, (Oxford, 1971), 278.

475 See Meir Hecker, "The Roman Road Legio-Zippori," *Yediots* 25 (1961): 175–186. [in Hebrew]; Joseph Geiger, "Shepphoris and the 'War of Qitos,'" *Cathedra* 8 (1978): 69–70 [in Hebrew]; Smallwood, 433, note 15. For a different dating, see Oppenheimer, "Jewish Community in Galilee," 62, note 49; Ya'akov Meshorer, "The Coins of Sepphoris as Historical Source," *Zion* 43(1978): 185–200 [in Hebrew]. Stuart S. Miller, "Hellenistic and Roman Sepphoris: The Historical Evidence," in *Sepphoris in Galilee: Crosscurrents of Culture*, eds. Rebecca Martin Nagy, et al. (Winnona Lake. Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 21–27.

476 On a Hadrianeum in Tiberias, see Epiphanius, *Panarion Haer.* 30, 12 (Ed. K. Holl, GCS, vol. 254, Leipzig 1915); *TB Yevamot* 96 b. See also Timothy. C.G. Thornton, "The Stories of Joseph of Tiberias," *Vigiliae Christianae* 44(1990): 54–63. N. Nicole Belayche, *Judaea-Palaestina: The Pagan Cults in Roman Palestine* (second to fourth century), (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 180. For the Hadrianeum in Caesarea, see Michael Avi Yonah, "The Roman Road System," *Israel Exploration Journal* 1 (1950/51): 56–58. Lehmann—Holum, Inscription No. 59. For an updated summary, see *Caesarea and the Middle Coast*, inscription No. 1262, 200–203.

and therefore it greatly influenced his behavior in the region. On the other hand stood the viewpoint of his Jewish subjects, mainly within the religious sphere, that caused them to treat the emperor's activities with suspicion. Did the Jews interpret most of his activities as intending to harm their religious freedom, which they had enjoyed throughout the period of Roman rule, and that even in times of crisis, such as the Great Revolt and the destruction of the Second Temple, was not imperiled by any real danger?⁴⁷⁷

I have given above a lengthy description of the general and religious policies of Hadrian in the East, their trends and goals. I will now try to deal with some of the general views of Hadrian relating to Judaism, which did not derive from any hostility, but was formed through an examination of the position and function of Provincia Iudaea within the alignment of eastern provinces and its readiness to become culturally, socially, and religiously integrated within these provinces.

On coins minted by Hadrian after the suppression of the Bar Kokhba revolt, scholars have found evidence for the positive intentions of the emperor toward the Jews of the province. On this matter, I quote the words of Toynbee: "Hadrian had after all brought to Iudaea the sword for the time being only, what he ultimately brought was peace. Hence it is a peaceful, contented, urbanized Iudaea not a Iudaea Capta or a Iudaea Devicta, that takes her place among the countries and cities of the Hadrianic coins-series and testifies, along with the rest, to the blessings of imperial rule."⁴⁷⁸

If Hadrian's policy was guided by the question about the position and role of the province within the Empire, then the balance between Provincia Iudaea and its contribution to Rome as against the rights and benefits it enjoyed, was a negative one—at least as the emperor perceived it.

I noted above a number of attempts made by Hadrian to Hellenize Palestine; but Sepphoris, Tiberias, Neapolis, and Gaza were exceptional cases,⁴⁷⁹ and do not prove the rule for Iudaea in general. Most of the Jewish population was not prepared to become integrated within the Panhellenism policy of the emperor, and regarded the policy as unsuitable and standing in absolute contradiction to Judaic values, especially since the divinity of Zeus/Jupiter and an emperor cult were central to it. Again we witness the same different viewpoints while the emperor saw Hellenization as the core element in the process of

477 See Smallwood, 344–346.

478 See Jocelyn M.C. Toynbee, *The Hadrianic School: A Chapter in the History of Greek Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1934), 117–121; H. St. J. Hart, "Iudaea and Rome: The Official Commentary," *Journal of Theological Studies* 3 (1952): 192–194.

479 Oppenheimer, "Bar Kokhba Revolt," 45.

unifying the Roman Empire, and he was confronted by a Jewish population that had for generations conducted fierce struggles against Hellenization and against whatever represented it in the Land of Israel.⁴⁸⁰ The claim made by Dyson for the centrality of the cultural process as a cause for the revolt only strengthens this argument.⁴⁸¹ The Jews were not only completely uninterested in becoming integrated within Hadrian's Panhellenic plans, but they even broadened their conversion activities among the gentiles, so much so that Oliver could claim Hadrian's Panhellenic policy in 130 CE to have had religious motivations. In his view, the policy's main aim was to achieve religious uniformity in all the cities of the Greek world in order to halt the spread of Judaism and Christianity, which had a strong force of attraction, particularly in the Greek world.⁴⁸² In the negative balance of Provincia Judaea, significant weight lay in the fact that Judaism was a permitted religion (*religio licita*) in the Roman world ever since the conquest of the Land of Israel by the Romans.⁴⁸³ This gave greater prominence to the isolationism of the Jews from the Graeco-Roman world, an anomalous phenomenon within the framework of the overall policy of Hadrian and an intolerable one for him. Den Boer, in his article on the religious policy of Hadrian, wrote that "it was dangerous to interfere with his favorite ideas, people who did not share them were sure of disfavour. Geographical distance no longer counted, Egypt was in Italy and Canopus in Tivoli. Unity of the Empire should be—and likewise unity of the people."⁴⁸⁴

Note, also, that in 130 CE there were strong signs of Hadrian's tendency towards absolute rule. If this was the case, it is reasonable to suppose that the emperor wanted to cancel the special status of Judaism as a permitted religion, yet naturally without causing harm to the position of the province as part of the imperial system. At this time, the prestige of Hadrian was firmly established throughout the Empire, and his relations with the Parthians were

480 Carol Bakhos, ed., *Ancient Judaism in its Hellenistic Context* (Leiden: Brill 2005).

481 See Dyson (above, 14–22) and note 28.

482 See Oliver (above, note 434), 137.

483 See Smallwood, 35. For the difficulties related to the term *religio licita*, see Seth Schwartz, "Political, Social and Economic Life in the Land of Israel 66–c. 235," *Cambridge History of Judaism* IV (2006): 29–30; Paula Fredriksen, "Mandatory Retirement: Ideas in the Study of Christian Origins Whose Time Has Come to Go," in *Israel's God and Rebecca's Children: Christology and Community in Early Judaism and Christianity: Essays in Honor of Larry W. Hurtado and Alan F. Segal*. Eds. David B. Capes et al. (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2007): 34–36.

484 See den Boer (above, note 418), 202.

normalized,⁴⁸⁵ so that he saw no hindrance to turning Judaea into an integral part of the system of Roman provinces and not allowing it to remain any longer as a separate and isolated unit.

1.5.3 *Immediate Factors—The Danger to National Existence?*

Research on the Second Revolt identified two direct and instantaneous factors, each of which—or both together—could have constituted the immediate cause or causes for the outbreak of the Bar Kokhba Revolt.⁴⁸⁶

1.5.4 *The Foundation of Aelia Capitolina*

1. Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, LIX 12:

At Jerusalem he founded a City in place of the one which had been razed to ground, naming it Aelia Capitolina, and on the site of the temple of the God he raised a new temple to Jupiter, This brought on a war of no slight importance nor of brief duration, for the Jews deemed it intolerable that foreign races should be settled in their city and foreign religious rites planted there.⁴⁸⁷

This quotation does not cite the original words of Cassius Dio, who lived at the end of the second and the beginning of the third century; but it is a section from a synopsis written by the monk Xiphilinus at the request of the Emperor Michael VII Parapinaces in the 1070s.⁴⁸⁸ According to this late evidence, the founding of Aelia Capitolina roused the Jews to revolt against the Romans.

⁴⁸⁵ See above, 15, notes 7–8.

⁴⁸⁶ In the following discussion about the immediate causes of the revolt, I will not cite the entire scholarship devoted to the question. For a complete bibliography for the years 1960–2000, see Menahem Mor, Uriel Rapaport, “Bibliography of Works on the Bar Kokhba Revolt (1960–1983),” *Bar Kokhba Revolt-New Approaches*, 243–254; idem, “Bibliography of Works on the Bar Kokhba Revolt (1984–2000),” *New Studies on the Bar Kokhba Revolt*, 139–161; and in appendix A, see also Roland Deines, above, note 199, 192 note 2.

⁴⁸⁷ *LCL*, vol. 9, translated by E. Cary.

⁴⁸⁸ On Cassius Dio and Xiphilinus, see Peter A. Brunt, “On Historical Fragments and Epitomes,” *Classical Quarterly* 30 (1980): 477–494; Benjamin Isaac, “Cassius Dio on the Revolt of Bar Kokhba,” 211–219 [= *Scripta Classica Israelica* 7 (1983/84): 68–76]; Mordechai Gichon, “New Insight into the Bar Kokhba War and a Reappraisal of Dio Cassius 69. 12–13,” *Jewish Quarterly Review* 77 (1986): 15–43.

2. Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, (HE), 6:4

Thus, when the city had come to be free of the nation of the Jews, and its ancient inhabitants had been entirely destroyed, it was colonized by a foreign race and the Roman city that thereafter arose changed its name and was called Aelia in honor of the reigning emperor, Aelius Hadrian. And as the church in it was now composed of Gentiles, the first after the bishops of the circumcision to be entrusted with the administration of those there was Marcus.⁴⁸⁹

The writings of Eusebius, the bishop of Caesarea in the fourth century, are usually filled with hatred for the Jews, especially in his description of the Second Revolt and the behavior of its leader. According to Eusebius, it appears that the founding of Aelia Capitolina was part of the punitive measures that the Romans took against the Jews after the revolt was suppressed. In addition, he did not mention circumcision as a cause, and he accused the “madness” of the Jews and their leader Bar Kokhba as the cause of the revolt. In view of the conflicting evidence in the sources regarding the time and motive for the construction of Aelia Capitolina, two main questions arise. The first is the cause (or causes) that prompted Hadrian to build the colony, and the second is when exactly it was built. The answers to these questions will determine whether its founding was the pretext for the revolt.⁴⁹⁰ I have rejected above any suggestion that the erection of Aelia Capitolina in the years 129–130 CE, during Hadrian’s visit to the region, was an intentional anti-Jewish measure. The founding of the city was part of the general policy of the Caesar to strengthen the Hellenistic foundations in his empire. It was founded as a result of an examination of the status and function of Provincia Judaea within the system of eastern provinces and its readiness to become culturally, socially, and religiously integrated into this system.⁴⁹¹ The main person who vindicated Hadrian from any anti-Jewish intentions in this connection was Benjamin Isaac, who explained, as mentioned above, the erection of Aelia Capitolina within the general Roman policy. Ever since the days of Trajan, the Romans in the border provinces in Europe aspired to match the number of colonies in the provinces to the number of legions

489 *Ecclesiastical History*, trans. Roy J. Deferrari, in *The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1965): Vol. 1, 214.

490 Judy Magnes, “Aelia Capitolina: A Review of some Current Debates about Hadrianic Jerusalem,” in *Unearthing Jerusalem: 150 Years of Archaeological Research in the Holy City*, eds. Katharina Galor, Gideon Avni (Winona Lake, In: Eisenbrauns, 2011): 313–324.

491 See above, 109–110.

stationed there. This principle was also applied in Syria, although the number of colonies there had already amounted to three before the reign of Trajan. In view of this principle, Hadrian's aim in the reconstruction of Jerusalem was clear. He wanted to restore the city and make it the second Roman colony in Judaea. He chose Jerusalem as a colony because the Tenth Legion Fretensis had been stationed in the city since 70 CE.⁴⁹²

David Golan also linked the founding of Aelia Capitolina with the general policy of the Roman emperor, but took the discussion to the theological level: "Hadrian's major concern became what was the optimal answer to various questions: by what manner and means, in spite of his self-imposed limits, could Christianity be beaten, in spite of its not being confined to a territory, a nation, an army or a similar framework, how could this rival faith be removed from the precincts of Rome?..." Hadrian had become more and more confident that only by reversing the situation completely, by toppling the essential Christian symbol, would his needs be served. It was of vital importance to provide the Roman public with self-evident proof that would weaken the remaining symbols, preaching, and postulates of Christianity to their foundation.⁴⁹³

The ruins of Jerusalem were used by the Christians in their polemics against the Jews to prove the realization of the curse started by Jesus: "**No one stone will be left here upon another, all will be thrown down.**"⁴⁹⁴ According to Golan, the decision of Hadrian to build Aelia Capitolina over the ruins of Jerusalem was also fostered by the echoes of the polemics based on the principles of Christianity and on the signs that prove its truths. In this polemical debate, "**Jerusalem destroyed**" was the central argument, and the efforts of the

492 Isaac, "Roman Colonies," 104, note 83. For a similar interpretation, see Boatwright, above, note 492, 172–173, 196–203. See also Michael Zahrnt, "Zahl, verteilung und Charakter der Hadrianischen Kolonien (unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Aelia Capitolina)," in *Stuttgarter Kolloquium zur Historischen Geographie des Altertums* 2, 1984 und 3, 1987, eds. Eckart Olshausen, Holger Sonnabend (Bonn: Habelt, 1991): 463–486.

493 David Golan, "Hadrian's Decision to Supplant 'Jerusalem' by 'Aelia Capitolina,'" *Historia* 35 (1986): 236–237.

494 On Jesus' sayings about the destruction of the Temple, see Matt. 23: 37–38: Matt. 24: 2: Mark 13:2: "As Jesus came out of the temple, one of the disciples said to him, Look Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings. Then asked him, Do you see these great buildings? No one stone will be left here upon another all will be thrown down"; Luke 19, 41–44: As Jesus came near and saw the city, he wept over it... Indeed, the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up ramparts around you and surround you, and hem you on every side. They will crush you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave within you one stone upon another..."

Pauline school of thought to bring Christianity to the nations could not minimize the centrality of Jerusalem in the story of Jesus.

In my opinion, the main fault in the view suggested by Golan is that it tries to create a kind of forestalling of the Julian the Apostate affair in 363 CE,⁴⁹⁵ even though it is difficult to link this matter with the pagan emperor Hadrian, since there is no attempt here at rebuilding the Temple. In fact, it is the Temple far more than Jerusalem that stands at the center of the prophecy of Jesus.⁴⁹⁶

Martin Goodman regarded the decision of Hadrian to establish a Roman colony in Jerusalem as a continuation of Trajan's policies. During the reign of Trajan, a Jewish revolt broke out in the Diaspora against a background of despair among the Jews at the refusal of the authorities to rebuild the Temple. The response of Trajan was harsh, to the extent that Goodman called it a "final solution" for the destruction of Judaism. Hadrian's role in this process was the decision to turn Jerusalem into a Roman colony. The erection of "a little Rome" in place of Jerusalem would make sure that the Jews could no longer hope for the reconstruction of their Temple in Jerusalem. In Goodman's view, the unique aspect of the founding of Aelia Capitolina was that it was not erected, as were the other colonies, in honor of its citizens, but in order to repress a group of subjects.⁴⁹⁷

The view proposed by Goodman cannot withstand criticism. First of all, if behind the revolt in the Diaspora there was continuous despair at the failure to rebuild the Temple, one might expect that the population of the Land of Israel would have taken an active role in the revolt. However, it is quite clear that a significant portion of the population of Provincia Judaea and of Idumaea did not participate in the revolt.⁴⁹⁸ Even with regard to Galilee, which is usually associated with the War of Quietus, there are some who doubt its participation in events that might be associated with the Diaspora revolt.⁴⁹⁹ Furthermore,

495 Glen W. Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978, digitally reprinted in 1997).

496 See the discussion above, 115 of *Midrash Genesis Rabba*, 64, 29. As I said, the source does not constitute proof that Hadrian "wanted to reconstruct Jerusalem as a Jewish city, and therefore there is no mention of rebuilding the Temple.

497 See Martin Goodman, "Diaspora Reactions to the Destruction of the Temple," in *Jews and Christians: The Parting of the Ways, AD 70–135*, ed. James D.G. Dunn (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr 1992), 27–38. See also idem, "Trajan and the Origins of the Bar Kokhba War," *Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered*, 23–29.

498 For a recent summary, see Miriam Pucci Ben Zeev, "The Uprisings in the Jewish Diaspora, 116–117," *Cambridge History of Judaism*, IV, 93–104.

499 David Rokeah, "The War of Kitos: Towards the Clarification of a Philological-Historical Problem," *Scripta Hiersosolymitana* 23 (1972): 79–84.

had the main reason for the Second Revolt been the founding of the colony Aelia Capitolina instead of Jerusalem, which, as Goodman said, was a colony that was not intended even for the “assimilated Hellenized” Jews, we would expect a different reaction from the participants in the Second Revolt. Indeed, there is hardly any scholar who thinks that Jerusalem was in the hands of the rebels or that they tried to conquer it.⁵⁰⁰ However, anyone who claims that the founding of Aelia Capitolina preceded the revolt and was the main cause for its outbreak must prove what was the place of Jerusalem during the course of the revolt!

Among the studies on Aelia Capitolina⁵⁰¹ and its connection to the Temple Mount are those by Yaron Zvi Eliav.⁵⁰² One of the important conclusions he drew is that Aelia Capitolina did not include the Temple Mount, and that therefore the city remained in its state of desolation.⁵⁰³ Following the viewpoint of Oded Irshai, who noted the tendency of Christian authors of the Byzantine period to give a new interpretation to Hadrian’s acts in connection with the Bar Kokhba revolt and to color them in anti-Jewish hues,⁵⁰⁴ Eliav argued that throughout the Cassius Dio summary there are certain theological leanings of the monk Xiphilinus, and that it is only his words in the name of Cassius Dio that link the Temple of Jupiter to the Temple Mount.⁵⁰⁵

When Xiphilinus wants to present Hadrian’s actions as intended against the Jews, he turns them into a theological confrontation between Hadrian and the Jewish God. He relocated the pagan temple and simply transferred it from the city to the Temple Mount. Moreover, he painted this act, which was

⁵⁰⁰ See below 287–288.

⁵⁰¹ For a review article with an extensive bibliography, see Klaus Biberstein, “Aelia Capitolina,” in *Jerusalem Before Islam*, eds. Zeidan Kafafi, Robert Schick (Oxford, Archaeopress, 2007), Chapter 15, 134–168. See also Jürgen Malitz, “Rom, Athen und Jerusalem: Kaiser Hadrian auf Reisen,” in *Von den Olympischen Spielen bis zur Potsdamer Konferenz. Standardthemen des Geschichtsunterrichts forschungsnah*, eds. Waltraud Schreiber, Carola Gruner (ARS UNA, 2006): 125–162; Emanuel Friedheim, “The Religious and Cultural World of Aelia Capitolina: A New Perspective,” *Archiv Orientalni* 75 (2007): 125–152.

⁵⁰² Yaron Z. Eliav, “Hadrian’s Actions in the Jerusalem Temple Mount according to Cassius Dio and Xiphilini Manus,” *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 4 (1997): 125–144; idem, “The Urban Layout of Aelia Capitolina: A New View from the Perspective of the Temple Mount,” in *The Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered*, 241–277; idem, *God’s Mountain The Temple Mount in Time, Place, and Memory* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005).

⁵⁰³ Eliav, 87.

⁵⁰⁴ Oded Irshai, “Constantine and the Jews: The Prohibition Against Entering Jerusalem: History and Historiography,” *Zion* 65 (1995): 129–178 [in Hebrew].

⁵⁰⁵ Eliav, 86–87, note 15.

unbiased and quite natural for the foundation of a new colony, in the violent strokes of religious conflict.⁵⁰⁶ In Eliav's rejection of the historical value of the Cassius Dio-Xiphilinus summary regarding the acts of Hadrian in Jerusalem and the Temple Mount, he also does not accept the location of the pagan temple on the Temple Mount.⁵⁰⁷

According to Eliav, no anti-Jewish tendencies should be ascribed to Hadrian. All that guided him in the foundation of Aelia Capitolina and in leaving the area of the old Temple sanctuary outside the city, were technical and logistic considerations. These considerations induced the Roman founders of the colony to discard the borders of the old city that lay in ruins before them and to design their colony within a new urban framework. The urban centers, the traffic routes, the temples, and other architectural elements created a new picture for the city of Jerusalem.⁵⁰⁸

If we adopt the conclusions of Eliav that the founders of Aelia Capitolina raised a new city, then its erection did not change the realities of Jerusalem at all. Since the year 70 CE, Jerusalem had remained in its ruined state. Jews did not live there, and the permanent camp of the Tenth Legion was stationed in the city. Therefore, we can discount the founding of Aelia Capitolina as the main cause for the Second Revolt.⁵⁰⁹ In view of the explanations of Eliav, it is clear that the foundation of Aelia Capitolina was not a *casus belli* for the rebels.

To complete the discussion about Aelia Capitolina as a possible cause for the outbreak of the revolt, it is necessary to discuss the date for the foundation of the colony. This will be done mainly on the basis of numismatic evidence.

506 Eliav, 82.

507 For a different view, see Yoram Tsafrir, "The Topography and Archaeology of Aelia Capitolina," in *The History of Jerusalem: The Roman and Byzantine Periods (70–638 CE)*. eds. Yoram. Tsafrir, Shemuel Safrai (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 1999), 157. Idem, "Numismatics and the Foundation of Aelia Capitolina—a Critical Review," *Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered*, 31–36.

508 Glen W. Bowersock, "A Roman Perspective of the Bar Kokhba War," in *Approaches to Ancient Judaism*, ed. William S. Green (Chicago: 1980), 11, p. 135. Though he adopted Dio's evidence for the establishing of the colony, he rejected it as a cause for the Revolt. He adds that the Zeus temple was not erected on the holy Jewish site. From Xiphilinus' perspective the temple was a replacement of God's Jewish Temple. See Mildenberg, "Coins and Documents," 333, who accepted the description of Dio, and argued that it fits the emperor's urban and Hellenization policies. However, he rejected the details about the Zeus temple, since there is no additional literary and archaeological proof.

509 Yuval Shahar, "Was there a Civilian Settlement in Jerusalem between the Two Jewish Revolts?," *New Studies in Jerusalem* 12 (2006): 131–146 [in Hebrew].

As early as 1967, Ya'akov Meshorer noted that in the archaeological plundering of Mount Hebron, a coin hoard was found dating to the period of the Bar Kokhba Revolt that contained some coins from Aelia Capitolina. From these coins, Meshorer deduced that one should accept the words of the Cassius Dio-Xiphilinus summary regarding the founding of the city in the year 130 CE, i.e., before the outbreak of the revolt.⁵¹⁰ Since these coins were not found in an official excavation, some have cast doubt as to whether they were minted in Aelia before the end of the revolt. Therefore, they cannot provide evidence for the date of the founding of this colony,⁵¹¹ but Hanan Eshel and Zissu, in an archaeological survey of the refuge caves in Nahal Michmash (Wadi Suweinit) found coins that assist in determining the date of the founding of Aelia Capitolina.⁵¹² The reference is to two undated coins, minted in Aelia Capitolina (Nos. 11 and 12), that were found together with four Bar Kokhba coins: three coins (Nos. 13–15) dated the second year of the revolt, i.e., 133/134 CE, and one coin (No. 16) from an undated series that was minted in the third and fourth year of the revolt. The discovery of these two coins of Aelia Capitolina, together with coins minted during the course of the revolt, indicates that these coins were minted before the year 135 CE.

Arie Kindler reaches the same conclusion, also on the basis of the numismatic analysis. In addition to the find mentioned above, Kindler relies on an analysis of the coins of the foundation of the city during the reign of Hadrian, on the form of Hadrian's portrait and the inscription beside it embossed on these coins. Thus, Kindler also regards the founding of the colony as a *casus belli* for the Second Revolt.⁵¹³

⁵¹⁰ Yaakov Meshorer, "A Coin Hoard of the Bar-Kokhba's Time," *Israel Museum News* 4 (1985): 43–50; idem, *The Coinage of Aelia Capitolina*, Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 1989), 19.

⁵¹¹ See, for example, Benjamin Isaac, Aharon Oppenheimer, "The Revolt of Bar Kokhba: Ideology and Modern Scholarship," in *Between Rome and Babylon*, 211, note 65. Herr claimed that the hoard was buried in the year 135, and it may be that the coins of the city began to be minted during the course of the revolt.

⁵¹² Hanan Eshel, Boaz Zissu, "Coins from the el-Jai Cave in Nahal Mikhmash (Wadi Suweinit)," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 14 (2000–2002): 168–175; Hanan Eshel, "The Date of the Founding of Aelia Capitolina," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Fifty Years after Their Discovery*, eds. Emanuel Tov, James C. VanderKam (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society; Israel Museum, 2000): 636–643.

⁵¹³ Arie Kindler, "Was Aelia Capitolina Founded before or after the Outbreak of the Bar Kokhba War? A Numismatic Evidence," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 14 (2000–2002): 176–179.



FIGURE 1.6
Founding coin of Aelia Capitolina.

It appears that the Roman colony of Aelia Capitolina was founded before the outbreak of the revolt,⁵¹⁴ but was its founding the immediate cause for this outbreak? In view of Eliav's research, I doubt this assumption. The conclusion of Eliav is that the founding of the colony did not directly affect the Temple Mount. Therefore, I find it difficult to regard its founding as one of the causes for the revolt, since the city had been under direct Roman control from as early as the year 70 CE, after the destruction of the Temple and the stationing of the Tenth Legion.

On the other hand, if we reject Eliav's conclusions and regard the establishment of the colony as a cause for the outbreak of the revolt, then the reaction of the Jews to its founding is very surprising. If this was the cause, then one would expect that the leaders of the revolt and its participants would have concentrated all their efforts in an attempt to conquer the city, to purify it, perhaps even to renew the cultic rites in it, and to try to rebuild the Temple. According to the information at our disposal, this did not occur.

The numismatic evidence is double proof that the rebel fighters did not reach Jerusalem. In excavations in Jerusalem only four Bar Kokhba coins have been found thus far, a tiny number in comparison with the 15,000 that were found throughout the region.⁵¹⁵ On the other hand, in the areas of the uprising,

514 Deines (above, note 199), 92–93, note 5, wrote that “the publication of a letter of Hadrian written in Jerusalem in 130 CE that mentions the ancient city name may change the discussion again.” For the letter, see Tullia Ritti, “Documenti Adrianei da Hierapolis di Frigia: Le epistole di Adriano alla città,” in *L'Hellénisme d'Époque Romaine: Nouveaux Documents, nouvelles Approches* (1^{er} s.a.C.—III^e s.p.C.) Actes du Colloque International à la mémoire de Louis Robert, Paris, 7–8 Juillet 2000, ed. Simone Follet (Paris: De Boccard, 2004), 336–339; La lettera del 130 d. C. line 13: *Ἱερὸς δὲ λαμδίς*. I believe that the letter does not open again the question of the dating of the establishing of the Colony because during Hadrian's visit in 130, the name of the city had not yet changed.

515 Hanan Eshel, “‘Bethar was Captured and the City was Plowed’: Jerusalem, Aelia Capitolina, and the Bar Kokhba Revolt,” *Eretz Israel* 28 (2007): 21–28 [in Hebrew]. See also Michael Erlich, “On the Distinction between the Establishment of Aelia Capitolina and the Construction of a Roman Shrine on the Temple.” “Mount according to Epiphanius of Salamis,” *New Studies on Jerusalem* 8 (2002): 111–116 [in Hebrew].

thousands of coins of the Second Revolt were found.⁵¹⁶ Even the attempt to find evidence of the control of the rebels over Jerusalem in the documents of Wadi Murabba'at do not appear to be serious. From an examination of Documents 22 and 29 from Murabba'at, it was determined that the papyri dates are before the year 78 CE and have no connection with the events of the Second Revolt.⁵¹⁷

1.5.5 *The Ban on Circumcision*

Historia Augusta, Vita Hadriani, 14.2:

*Moverunt ea tempestate et Iudaei bellum, quod vettabantur mutilare genitalia.*⁵¹⁸

This single line in the biography of Hadrian, from a collection of biographies of the Caesars called *Historia Augusta*, has been interpreted as evidence that Hadrian forbade the Jews to perform circumcisions.⁵¹⁹ The problematic

⁵¹⁶ Boaz Zissu, Hanan Eshel, "The Geographical Distribution of the Bar Kokhba Coins: What was renewed in the last Twenty Years (1980–2000)," *New Studies on the Bar Kokhba Revolt*, 17–40; Chaim J. Kaufman, "Additions to the Corpus of Leo Mildenberg's Coinage of the Bar Kokhba War," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 14 (2000–2002): 129–152.

⁵¹⁷ For a comprehensive discussion of these documents, see Eshel, notes 24–25, 48, above. I will discuss about Jerusalem during the revolt below.

⁵¹⁸ For the different translations of the phrase *mutilare genitalia*, see, for example, David Magie: "At this time the Jews began war, because **they were forbidden to practise circumcision.**" (*The Scriptores Historiae Augusta*, translated by Magie D, *LCL*, vol. 1, Cambridge, Mass., 1921, 45). M.A. Rabello: "At that time the Jews, too, began war because **they were forbidden to mutilate (mutilare) the sexual organs,**" Alfredo Mordechai Rabello, "The Ban on Circumcision as a Cause of Bar Kokhba's Rebellion," *Israel Law Review* 29 (1995), 187 [= Rabello, *The Jews in the Roman Empire: Legal Problems, from Herod to Justinian* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2000), Ch. 5, 187 (hereafter: Rabello, Ban)] Isaac: "At this time the Jews started a war because **they were forbidden to mutilate their genitals,**" Benjamin Isaac, "Orientals and Jews in the *Historia Augusta*," Isaac Benjamin, *The Near East under the Roman Rule, Selected Papers* (Leiden 1998), p. 277. Golan: "The Iudaei began war because **they were forbidden to damage a necessary part of the male's genital organs,**" David Golan, "Iudaei in *Scriptores Historiae Augusta*," *Latomus* (1988), 338.

⁵¹⁹ On circumcision in general as a Jewish identity symbol, see Peter Schäfer, *Judeophobia. Attitudes toward the Jews in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), 93–105: "Circumcision;" Simon Claude Mimouni, *La circoncision dans le monde judéen aux époques grecque et romaine: Histoire d'un conflit interne au judaïsme* (Louvain Peeters, 2007).

nature of the *Historia Augusta* in general and the biography of Hadrian in particular (which is ascribed to an imaginary author named Spartianus) are well documented.⁵²⁰

As for the attitude and description of the Jews in the *Historia Augusta* Ronald Syme has already drawn attention to the fact that the Jews provide a rich variety of peculiarity, and therefore the [work] contains comic aspects: "The concern of the *Historia Augusta* with the Jews was not, it appears, either sustained or notably malevolent. Fun and oddities rather than any preoccupation with cult and race and nationality."⁵²¹

David Golan referred also to the grotesque and ironic style of writing in *Historia Augusta*. In his view, circumcision is mentioned in a context of mockery for the sake of *thaumasia* (an extraordinary kind of the strange-grotesque that also arouses amazement). In his words, "No less telling is the fact that the editor-author rather than choose the prevailing technical or juridical term for describing circumcision in his text, that is *circumcidere*, preferred an expression which bluntly associated it with castration. The literary effect to which the writer aimed seems obvious, combining erotic innuendos and scoffing remarks on account of the oddity of the Iudaei."⁵²²

In a similar manner, Benjamin Isaac claimed, "It is worth noting that the SHA [Scriptores Historiae Augusta] does not mention circumcision but mutilation. The implication is that this was a ludicrous rebellion, for who in any sense would go to war because he was forbidden to mutilate his genitals?"⁵²³ Nevertheless, Herr and Mordechai Rabello maintained that the only cause for the revolt was the ban on circumcision. Herr explained that circumcision was perceived by Hadrian as castration and thus he imposed on the Jews the decree forbidding castration. Herr found support for his view in *Midrash Bereshit Rabbati*, which will be discussed later on.⁵²⁴

520 On the *Historia Augusta*, see Ronald Syme, *The Historia Augusta: A Call of Clarity*, Bonn: R. Habelt, 1971; David Golan, *Scriptores Historiae Augustae, vita Hadriani*, Jerusalem 1989 [in Hebrew]. See also Jörg. Fündling, *Kommentar zur Vita Hadriani der Historia Augusta*, Bonn, Dr. Rudolf Habelt GmbH, 2006, vol. 2, 665–679.

521 Ronald Syme, *Emperors and Biography: Studies in the Historia Augusta*, Oxford, 1971, 68.

522 D. Golan, above, note 4, 338. See B. Isaac, "Attitude of the Romans Towards the Jews and Judaism," *Zion* 65 (2005), 64 [in Hebrew].

523 Isaac (above, note 6), 277–278. See also Benjamin Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2004), 472–474.

524 Moshe D. Herr, "Persecutions and Martyrdom in Hadrian's Days," *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 23 (1972): 82–125; idem, "The Causes," 1–11.

Midrash Bereshit Rabbati, 17, 1:

R. Yudan said, "When Turnus Rufus banned circumcision, a man circumcised his son and went up to the Bema and was caught. He asked him: 'Didn't you hear that I prohibited?' He answered: 'I heard.' He asked him: 'So why did you circumcise your son?' He answered: 'Two set at me the prohibition; the king said that I shall do and his servant ordered not to do. Which one should I fulfill?' Turnus Rufus told him: 'The king allowed circumcising and I said not to circumcise, he will come and deal with you.' The baby replied from the bosom of his mother and said: 'You are exempt.' Since Turnus Rufus noticed that he is an infant, he said: 'He did not say it on his own, but he told it to me, and he dismissed him.'⁵²⁵

In his discussion of the sources that relate to the ban on circumcision, Oppenheimer claimed that these sources refer to the religious decrees that Hadrian promulgated after the suppression of the revolt.⁵²⁶ He shared the opinion of scholars who find in *Historia Augusta* a clear intention to arouse laughter and ridicule toward the Jews, exactly as Martial did in one of his epigrams: "Menophilus' person a sheath covers so enormous that it would be sufficient for the whole tribe of comic actors. This fellow I had imagined—for we often bathe together—was solicitous to spare his voice, Flaccus; but while he was exercising himself in the view of the people in the middle of the exercise ground, the sheath unluckily fell off: lo, he was circumcised."⁵²⁷ But his main criticism was aimed at Herr's use of *Midrash Bereshit Rabbati*. This *midrash* is a small part of the *midrash* compiled by Moses Hadarshan (the Preacher) who lived during the first half of the eleventh century in Narbonne and Toulouse. His nickname 'Hadarshan' was given for his expertise and because his books were written as collections of homiletics in the style of classic *midrashim*. His primary works have been lost, but select fragments have been preserved in

525 "אמר ר' יודן: משגור טורנוס רופוס שלא ימול אדם, מל אחד את בנו ועלה לבימה ונתפס. אמר לו: לא שמעת שגזרתי? אמר לו: שמעתי. אמר לו: ומפני מה מלת את בנך? אמר לו: שנים גזרו עלי גזרה, המלך אמר שאעשה ועבדו גזר שלא אעשה, אי זה אקיים? אמר לו טורנוס רופוס: מלך אמר לימול, ואני אמרתי שלא לימול, יבא ויעמוד עליך. ענה התינוק מחיק אמו ואמר: פטור אתה, כיון שראה טורנוס רופוס שהוא קטן, אמר: אינו אומר מעצמו אלא "פטרנוהו..." (Ed. H. Albeck, 73).

526 Aharon Oppenheimer, "The Ban on Circumcision as a Cause of the Revolt," *Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered*, 55–69.

527 Martialis, *Epigrammata*, 7, 82 (trans. W.C.A. Ker, *LCL*). See Stern, *Authors*, 1, 526–527. See also Shaye J.D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, varsities, Uncertainties* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), Appendix B: Was Menophilus Jewish?, 358–359.

secondary quotations, mainly by Rashi and the Dominican monk Raymondus Martini in his book *Pugio Fidei* (*The Dagger of Faith*), published in 1278.⁵²⁸ Indeed, the late date of the midrash of Moses Hadarshan cannot serve as reliable evidence for the circumcision decree.

Peter Schäfer also rejected the circumcision decree as a cause for the Second Revolt. In his view, this prohibition was imposed during the course of the rebellion or after its suppression, and the issue concerning circumcision was part of an internal Jewish struggle without any connection to Hadrian the Emperor.⁵²⁹ He based his perception on what is said in *Tosefta Shabbat* 46:9: “The mashukh (משוך) needs to be [re]circumcised. R. Yehudah said: he should not be [re]circumcised, if he has performed the epispasmos because this is dangerous. They said that many were [re]circumcised in the days of Ben Koziba, and they had children and did not die, for it is said: ‘Circumcising, he shall be circumcised’ (Gen. 17:13)—even a hundred times. And it says: ‘He has broken my covenant’ (Gen. 17:14) any uncircumcised male shall be cut off from his people: he has broken my covenant—to include the one who has his foreskin drawn forward (*mashukh*).”⁵³⁰

Those who drew their foreskin forward were Jews who did so of their own free will in order to be considered gentiles. They were assimilated Jews who collaborated with the Romans in the political and cultural sphere. Schäfer compares them to the Hellenists of the period preceding the decrees of Antiochus Epiphanes. In 1990, in a jubilee volume in honor of the Oxford scholar Geza Vermes, Schäfer returned to the subject of the Second Revolt and the circumcision decrees in an article on Hadrian’s policy in the Judaea.⁵³¹ And he

528 On Rabbi Moshe Hadarshan, see Martah Himmelfarb, “R. Moses the Preacher and the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs,” *Association for Jewish Studies Review* 9 (1984): 55–78; idem, “Some Echoes of Jubilees in Medieval Hebrew Literature,” John C. Reeves in *Tracing the Threads: Studies in the Vitality of Jewish Pseudepigraphy* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994), 114–135; Israel M. Ta-Shema, “Rabbi Moses Hadarshan and the Apocryphal Literature,” in *Studies in Jewish History and Literature*, Lectures Delivered on the Memorial Day for the Late Yitzhak Twersky at the Touro Graduate School of Jewish Studies, ed. C. Horowitz (Jerusalem: 2001) [in Hebrew]. Hananel Mack, *Mystery of Rabbi Moshe Hadarshan* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2010) [in Hebrew].

529 Schäfer, “Causes,” 74–94.

530 “המשוך צריך שימול, רבי יהודה אומר: משוך לא ימול, מפני שהוא מסוכן. אמרו לו: הרבה מלו בימי בן כוזבא והיו לו בנים ולא מתו, שנאמר ‘המול ימול’ (בראשית יז 13), אפילו מאה פעם ואומר ‘זאת בריתי הפר’ (שם, יז 14) לרבות את המשוך” (תוספתא, שבת מו, ט, מהדורת ליברמן, 71).

531 Peter Schäfer, “Hadrian’s Policy in Judea and the Bar Kokhba Revolt: A Reassessment,” in *Tribute to Géza Vermès: Essays on Jewish and Christian Literature and History*, ed. Philip

returned once again to this subject in an article he published in 1999 titled: "The Bar Kokhba Revolt and Circumcision: Historical Evidence and Modern Apologetics."⁵³² In both of these articles, Schäfer aims most of his critical arrows at Mordechai Rabello, Professor of Law at the Hebrew University.⁵³³ In Rabello's words, "Spartianus relates the events preceding the Bar Kokhba Revolt, and considers in explicit terms the ban on circumcision as the cause of the revolt . . . However, it is our position that in this renewal not only castration, but circumcision as well, could be banned and punished . . . It is reasonable to assume that like the ban on castration, the ban on circumcision held force over Jews and non-Jews through the Empire . . . the ban was probably enforced, in particular in the Eastern regions of the Empire (Syria, Palestine, Arabia and Egypt): i.e., the regions where circumcision was most heavily practiced."⁵³⁴ Rabello also rejected the interpretation of Schäfer regarding the "drawers of foreskin." In his opinion, the drawing of foreskins should not be ascribed only to the assimilated who had undergone the operation, since "the danger threatened the person who performed the act, e.g. the fathers etc., and not only the circumcised newborn son."⁵³⁵

This means that, according to Rabello, the drawing of foreskins was done out of fear of the Romans who tended to be especially strict in considering the tense political situation, and only a few did so for the sake of assimilation.

Schäfer's criticism focuses on the interpretation that Rabello gives to the sentence "*He should not be [re]circumcised . . . because this is dangerous.*" In his opinion, Rabello ignores the fact that the words *because this is dangerous* do not refer to the original circumcision but to the recircumcision after the foreskin was drawn. The word *dangerous* does not apply to Hadrian's prohibition of circumcision but to the medical procedure of the drawing process. In Schäfer's view, the words of Rabbi Yehudah in the Tosefta are not connected at all with

R. Davis, Richard White (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 281–303. See also Martin Hengel, "Hadrian Politik gegenüber Juden und Christen," in *Judaica et Hellenistica: Kleine Schriften*, ed. Martin Hengel (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1996), I, 358–391 [= *Journal of the Near Eastern Society of Columbia University* 16 (1987): 153–182].

532 Peter Schäfer, "The Bar Kokhba Revolt and Circumcision: Historical Evidence and Modern Apologetics," in *Jüdische Geschichte in hellenistisch-römischer Zeit: Wege der Forschung: von alten zum neuen Schürer*, ed. Aharon Oppenheimer, München: Oldenbourg, 1999): 119–132.

533 Rabello, "Ban," 176–214.

534 Rabello, "Ban," 188–189.

535 Rabello, "Ban," 198.

the Bar Kokhba revolt, but are concerned with the general phenomenon of the foreskin drawers, without reference to any definite historical event.⁵³⁶

I concur with Schäfer's main argument that the circumcision decree was not the cause of the revolt, but I do not agree with his explanations about the foreskin drawers. The central issue of the Bar Kokhba revolt was not the confrontation between assimilated Jews and national Jews who opposed cooperation with the Romans and the adoption of the Roman way of life. Ever since the Roman conquest of 63 BCE, there were Jewish collaborators with Roman rule. These were Jews who desired to live like the Romans, whom Schäfer called *assimilated Jews*. Did their circumcision prevent them from assimilating? A prominent example of Jews of this kind was Herod and his family, who not only did not try to draw their foreskins but were, in fact strictly observant of this commandment. It is sufficient to recall the condition that Herod laid down for Sellaeus the Nabataean: if Sellaeus wished to marry Herod's sister Salome, he would have to accept the customs of the Jews, including circumcision.⁵³⁷ In my opinion, the comparison that Schäfer makes between the internal struggle in Judaea and the situation in Judah on the eve of the Antiochus' decrees is invalid. The Hellenistic reform occurred in 175 BCE, before these decrees were issued. There appears to have been no danger to the national-religious existence of that generation; there is hardly any evidence for the struggle between Hellenists and nationalists, such as the Hasmoneans. For the years that preceded the Second Revolt and during its course, there is hardly no evidence for struggles of this kind. On the contrary, there is evidence of cooperation with the Roman government that did not entail the assimilation of the collaborators. In this regard, it is enough to recall the examples of Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai and Rabban Gamaliel.

Yossi Geiger gave a different interpretation of the sources by also detaching the circumcision prohibition from the name of the emperor. He cast doubt on the reliability of the evidence given by Spartianus and also rejected the indirect evidence in the *Digest of Modestinus* on permission to circumcise, which Antoninus Pius gave the Jews. In the view of Geiger, the circumcision prohibition was made at the initiative of the governor of Judaea, Tinius Rufus, who decreed it in the *Coercitio* following the uprising of the Jews when Aelia Capitolina was being established. Geiger does not regard the circumcision decree as a cause for the outbreak of the Bar Kokhba revolt, believing that the decree was imposed only after the revolt had already broken out.

536 Schäfer, above, note 47, in the *Vermes Volume*, 294–295.

537 *JA*, 16, 220–225.

This opinion aroused severe criticism, which was directed mainly at the claim of Geiger that persecution of the Christians until the third century was also caused by the *Coercitio* of the provincial governors and should be applied by analogy to the situation in Judaea.⁵³⁸ But Geiger's interpretation raises the question of whether the local governor could have taken the law concerning such a central matter for the Jewish population into his own hands while the emperor was in the region. The name of Tinius Rufus was mentioned frequently in the sources on the issue of the circumcision decree and other decrees as well. However, some were decreed only after the suppression of the revolt, which means a few years after Tinius Rufus had ceased to serve in his position. So, does the mention of his name indicate that he had initiated them? It is at least preferable, in my opinion, to regard the local governor as carrying out the legislated policy of the emperor, if any existed and if its execution was enforced by *Coercitio*.⁵³⁹ It is the very mention of the name Tinius Rufus in connection with the decrees that indicates that the act of the governor was not in the form of a general prohibition. Geiger himself thought that it was not in force even for the Land of Israel as a whole. If this is so, when was circumcision prohibited for all the Jews? We know that the prohibition had to be annulled in the *Rescriptum* of Antoninus Pius, with certain exceptions, such as the prohibition to circumcise gentiles, in order to inhibit the conversion movement?⁵⁴⁰

A parallel issue arises from the conclusions of Geiger that the circumcision prohibition was imposed by the governor after the uprising of the population of Judaea following the establishment of Aelia Capitolina. This conclusion, however, stands in contradiction to the events of the revolt, its territorial extension, and its participants, which I will discuss below.

538 Geiger's assumption about the Christians' persecutions through a *Coercitio* is not careful, and therefore should not be compared with Judaea. See Herr, "Causes," 8–9, note 41; David Rokeah, "The Church Fathers and the Jews in Writings Designed for Internal and External Use," in *Antisemitism Through the Ages*, ed. Shmuel Almog (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1980), 44, 65, note 13: "Today there are no serious objections to the assumption that the legal aspect of the persecutions stemmed from the power of *coercitio* of the provincial governors... I have no doubt that had Geiger been aware of Molthagen's clear and convincing interpretations which logically reconcile the entire complex of the available sources, he would not have hastened to pronounce so absolute a judgment and would not even have drawn an analogy between the persecutions of the Christians and Hadrian's edict on circumcision."

539 Herr, "Causes," 9, note 41.

540 Ranan Abusch, "Negotiating Difference: Genital Mutilation in Roman Slave Law and the History of the Bar Kokhba Revolt," *Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered*, 71–74.

1.5.6 *Bar Kokhba, Bar Kozibah?*

In view of what has been said above, neither the prohibition of circumcision nor the conversion of Jerusalem into a Roman colony were the immediate causes for the outbreak of the Second Revolt. It may be that these were actually the outcome of the revolt, as part of the punitive measures imposed by Hadrian on the Jews. Therefore the question must be asked, Was there a cause for the outbreak of the Second Revolt? In order to try to answer this question, I will now turn to the issue of Bar Kokhba's leadership. The leadership of Bar Kokhba is deduced from scattered evidence in the letters and coins of the revolt and in Rabbinic and Christian sources.

1. Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* (HE), 4: 6:

And so, as the rebellion of the Jews again progressed in seriousness and extent . . . At that time a certain **Bar Cochebas** by name, which means 'star' was the general of the Jews, who among other characteristics was a **cut-throat** and a **bandit**, but who relied on his name, as if dealing with slaves, and boasted that he was a star that had come down from heaven to shed light upon them in their misery.⁵⁴¹

2. Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* (HE), 8: 4:

The same author (Justin) mentioning the war of that time against the Jews, adds the following: "For in the Jewish war which has just taken place, Bar Chocheba, the leader of the Jewish rebellion, ordered Christians only to be brought to terrible punishments, if they did not deny Jesus as the Christ and blaspheme him."⁵⁴²

Eusebius of Caesarea mentions the war that was waged in those days against the Jews, and therefore he notes: "In the present Jewish war the leader of the Jewish rebels, Bar Kokhba, commanded that hostility should be shown only to the Christians if they insist on their refusal to deny the messianic nature of Jesus and to blaspheme his name."⁵⁴³

541 The Fathers of the Church, Eusebius Pamphili, *Ecclesiastical History*, Books 1–5, Translated by Roy J. Decker, New York, 1953, 213.

542 Ibid., 220.

543 Eusebius cited in Justin, *Apol.* 1.36.1. For parallel versions, see Eusebius, *Chronicles* to the year 133. Latin version: "Kokhba the duke of the Jewish sect, killed the Christians through various tortures [since] they refused to support him against the Roman army." Armenian

The Christian sources focused on the leader and his leadership, and on the condition of the Christian community during the revolt, as exemplified in the words of Eusebius. Christian authors wanted to justify the destiny and fate of Judaism after the destruction of the Second Temple and therefore gave prominence to the leading figure of Bar Kokhba as a false messiah who lied to his believers and brought heavy catastrophe upon them. Paradoxically, the messianic pretensions of the leader of the revolt can be found in the Jewish Talmudic sources in the form of an exegesis of a verse from the prophecy of Balaam: "There shall come a star out of Jacob and a scepter shall arise out of Israel." (Numbers 24:17):

3. *TJ. Ta'aniot* 4, 8:

Rabbi Aqiba when he saw Bar-Kozebah, he said this is the king Messiah. Said to him Rabbi Yohanan ben Torta, Aqiba grass will grow on your cheeks, and the Messiah will not yet have come!⁵⁴⁴

In 1968, Haim Dov Mantel published an article in which he discusses the motives for the Bar Kokhba revolt, reaching the conclusion that the revolt broke out in 125/126 CE.⁵⁴⁵ He dated the background for the disappointment and bitterness among the Jews to the early years of Hadrian's rule because he did not liberate the Land of Israel from Roman bondage as he had for the countries beyond the Euphrates. Mantel accepts the words of Eusebius, in spite of their hostility (Text 1), that reflect, in his opinion, the main cause for the outbreak of the revolt. Eusebius does not mention the two causes discussed above. He blames the Jews, whose aspiration for freedom and redemption caused them to rebel against Rome. He posits the Jews were headed by Bar Kokhba, whom

version: "Kokhbas, who led the Jewish rebellion, punished many of the Christians in several tortures since they refused to fight with him against the Romans." For a discussion on this source, see Richard Bauckham, "Jews and Jewish Christians in the Land of Israel at the Time of the Bar Kochba War, with Special Reference to the Apocalypse of Peter," in *Tolerance and Intolerance in Early Judaism and Christianity*, eds. Graham N. Stanton, Guy G. Stroumsa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998): 228–238.

544 "Rabbi Shimon Bar Yohai taught: Rabbi Akiba used to expound: A star shall come out of Jacob, Kosiba shall come out of Jacob. When Rabbi Akiba saw Bar Kosiba he used to say: This is the King Messiah. Rabbi Yohanan ben Torta said to him: Akiba, grass will grow on your cheeks and the Son of David will not have come." Parallel in *Lamentations Rabba* (Buber ed.), 101.

545 See Mantel, "Causes".

his supporters regarded as the Messiah.⁵⁴⁶ To clarify the question, Mantel discusses once again the national messianic phenomenon that was so widespread in Provincia Judaea during the first century CE. He noted a number of figures whom Josephus said were considered *kings* or *messiahs* by their supporters, an issue discussed later in this book. Mantel notes that, unlike the various messiahs who preceded Bar Kokhba, Bar Kokhba enjoyed the support of the sages of his generation, headed by Rabbi Akiba. The declaration of Rabbi Akiba concerning the messianic nature of the rebel leader and his recognition of him as a *prince* united the Jews in the country and in the Diaspora under the flag of Bar Kokhba.

In his further discussion of Eusebius (Text 3), Mantel deals mainly with the significance of the titles *messiah* and *prince* and, in fact, defines the leader of the revolt as a messiah: "The extent to which the Jews exalted the personality and later the memory of Bar Kokhba may be inferred from the Talmud, which implies that Bar Kokhba was short of only one quality to make him the Messiah. He was unable to smell whether a litigant was right or wrong. Apparently the Talmud held that all other qualities which Isaiah ascribes to the son of David, were fulfilled in Bar Kokhba."

Rabbi Akiba "not only had no doubt that Bar Kokhba actually fulfilled the function intended for the Messiah by succeeding in expelling the Romans from Judaea, but that his personality was also suited to the role of the Messiah."⁵⁴⁷

Mantel's article did not receive much response in the research literature, mainly because he dated the revolt back to the year 125/126, a date that does not correspond to what we know about the revolt. Perhaps another potential reason for the lack of response was his interest in the messianic nature of the rebel leader.⁵⁴⁸

Nevertheless, during the years that have passed, the discussion in the research literature on the question of the messianic (משיח) and princely (נשיא) nature of Bar Kokhba has widened, and most scholars make the distinction

546 Mantel, "Causes," 228, 278. Mantel also finds support in the words of Pausanias of the second century who wrote nearly at the same time as the repression of the revolt: "He [Hadrian] never wanted to go to war without a reason. Although he decreased, reduced and constricted the Hebrews who rebelled beyond Syria." (*Description of Greece*, 1, 5.5). See also Stern, *Authors*, 11, 192, no. 353.

547 Mantel, "Causes," 282.

548 See Mantel, "Causes," 239–242. See, for example, the criticism of Shimeon Appelbaum, "The Second Revolt and its Research," *Studies in Jewish History and the Land of Israel* 2 (1972): 48, note 53 [in Hebrew].

between the eschatological messiah and the national messiah. Mantel has been given indirect support by Craig Evans, who, like Mantel, argued that the title *Prince*, both on the coins and in the letters of the revolt, was imbued with eschatological-messianic meaning resembling the meaning of this title as it was understood in Qumran and in Ezekiel 37:24–25. According to Evans, the literary sources, however few and flimsy, describe Simon Bar Kokhba as the Messiah. He also believed that Rabbi Akiba, in referring to Bar Kokhba with the phrase “a star came out of Jacob,” recognized Bar Kokhba’s messianic nature as not merely a “call for encouragement” but as an expression of profound meaning for his supporters and indicated, in his view, that they indeed saw him as the Messiah.⁵⁴⁹

Some have tried to learn about the messianic figure of Ben Kosiba from the coins of the revolt, which were thought to be the façade of the Temple decorated with a star. Numismatists such as Meshorer, Mildenberg, and Kindler reject such thinking. The first two claim, for example, that the decoration was not a star but a rosette or rose,⁵⁵⁰ while Kindler thought that “the purpose of this ‘star’ which is sometimes no more than a kind of cross, is merely to fill empty space on the coin.”⁵⁵¹ On the other hand, Hillel Newman argued that on Roman coins, the rose and star are the same. He finds parallels to the coins of the revolt in coins from Asia Minor and Greece that were minted in honor of the Divine Antinous, the lover of Emperor Hadrian who drowned in the Nile, on which Newman identifies a star resembling a rose. He therefore continues to maintain the symbolic meaning of the star on the coins of the revolt and its messianic implications.⁵⁵² However, most of the researchers have shifted the discussion about messianism to the political sphere.

549 Craig A. Evans, “Was Simon Ben Kosiba Recognized as Messiah?,” in *Jesus and His Contemporaries: Comparative Studies*, ed. Craig A. Evans (Leiden: Brill, 1995): 183–211; Craig A. Evans, “Messianic Hopes and Messianic Figures in Late Antiquity,” *Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism* 3 (2006): 9–40.

550 Yaakov Meshorer, *The Jewish Coin Hoard*, Jerusalem, 1998, 134 [in Hebrew]; L. Mildenberg, *Coinage*, 43–45.

551 Habas (Rubin) Efrat, “The Title of Simeon ben Kosba,” in *Jerusalem and Eretz Israel, Arie Kindler Volume*, eds. Joshua Schwartz, et al. (Ramat Gan: Ingeborg Renert Center, Tel Aviv: Erets-Yi’sra’el Museum, 2000): 141–142 [in Hebrew], referring to Kindler’s assumption.

552 Hillel Newman, “The Star of Bar Kokhba,” *New Studies on the Bar Kokhba Revolt*, 98–99. Idem, “The Birth of the Messiah on the Day of Destruction—Historical and Anti-Historical Comments,” in *For Uriel: Studie in the History of Israel in Antiquity Presented to Professor Uriel Rappaport*, eds. Menahem Mor et al. (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center 2006): 85–110 [in Hebrew].

In the opinion of Yisrael Levin, “Messianism is not particularly a reason for uprising, but serves in most cases as an expression of the yearnings and impulses that usually originate in other spheres of life.”⁵⁵³ He therefore negates the very existence of political messianism in the descriptions of Josephus, even though there may have been those who acted against the Romans out of messianic motives. From the unique words of Rabbi Akiba on Bar Kokhba (Text 1) and the use of the title *Prince* on the coins and in the letters of Simon, one cannot learn, in Levin’s view, about the messianic nature of the revolt.⁵⁵⁴

Aharon Oppenheimer also restricts the messianic aspect of the revolt and deduces this from the fact that, in the letters and coins, the description of the leader is *Prince* and not *king* or *messiah*. He sees the image or figure of the leader of the revolt in terms of national realities, as a leader with political and military talents who had the charisma that comes from his great physical strength.⁵⁵⁵

Herr once again discusses this in “Realistic Political Messianism and Cosmic Eschatological Messianism in the Teachings of the Sages.”⁵⁵⁶ In his opinion, the phenomenon of messianism has many facets and varieties. Between the two extremes of realistic political messianism and catastrophic cosmic eschatological messianism, a variety of shades exists. He believes that “Ben Kosiba himself did not have and was not seen to have the slightest trace of any mystical or apocalyptic experience,” and that the Second Revolt “was imposed upon him by force of circumstance.”⁵⁵⁷

Efrat Habas-Rubin also rejected the interpretation that regards Bar Kokhba as a messianic figure. In her opinion, the distinction between the titles *Prince* and *Prince of Israel* (the title used by Simon Ben Kosiba) is central. His title was chosen to “emphasize that Bar Kokhba had no pretensions to be considered a member of the Davidic dynasty, or to compete with the royal house of David as it was understood in his period . . . and on the other hand, to stress the political

553 Lee I.A. Levine, “Messianic Trends at the End of the Second Temple Days,” in *Messianism and Eschatology. A Collection of Essays*, ed. Zvi Baras (Jerusalem: Shazar Center, 1983): 135–152 [in Hebrew].

554 *Ibid.*, 149.

555 Aharon Oppenheimer, “Bar Kokhba’s Messianism,” in *Messianism and Eschatology. A Collection of Essays*, ed. Zvi Baras (Jerusalem: Shazar Center, 1983): 153–165 [in Hebrew]. See also Dan Jaffé, “La figure messianique de Bar Kokhba,” *Henoch* 28 (2006): 103–123.

556 Moshe D. Herr, “Realistic Political Messianism and Cosmic Eschatological Messianism in the Teachings of the Sages,” *Tarbiz* 54 (1985): 331–346 [in Hebrew].

557 Herr, previous note, 344.

and national character of his leadership, while using a title that is not dissociated from the terms familiar in early and late Jewish tradition.”⁵⁵⁸

Schäfer, in summing up the issue of Bar Kokhba and the sages, continued to reject entirely the historical value of the sources that were mentioned. He especially refused to make any connection between Rabbi Akiba (and his statement that presumably points to the messianic nature of Bar Kokhba) and the support of the greatest sage of his generation in the revolt and in its leader. He explained how, in his opinion, the events of the Second Revolt and the description of Bar Kosiba himself were critically “inserted” into the world of the sages of the second century CE, and therefore the source in question and those similar to it cannot be considered evidence of the support of the sages for the revolt.⁵⁵⁹ In Schäfer’s view, the title *Prince* is well embedded in the world view of Second Temple Judaism. This title was preferred by the sages to the title *king* because it had less ideational impact: by the second century CE, *king* had lost its power with the last of the Hasmonean kings, especially after the reign of Herod. In spite of negating the connection between messianism and the Second Revolt, Schäfer finds no difficulty in attaching the title *messiah* to Bar Kosiba because, in his view, the Messiah was part of contemporary second-century history and not part of utopia or the future actions.⁵⁶⁰

Most scholars thus see Bar Kosiba as a political and national leader, mainly on the basis of various kinds of messiahs mentioned in Josephus.⁵⁶¹ Therefore, in order to define the messianism of Bar Kokhba and determine if it was an

558 Habas (Rubin), above, note 67, 133–146, especially 138.

559 Peter Schäfer, “Bar Kokhba and the Rabbis,” *Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered*, 1–22, see especially pages 15, 17. In the past, Schäfer cautiously argued that Rabbi Akiba recognized Bar Kokhba as the Messiah. See Peter Schäfer, “R. Aqiva und Bar Kokhba,” in *Studien zur Geschichte und Theologie des Rabbinischen Judentums*, ed. Peter Schäfer (Leiden: Brill, 1978): 65–121; idem, “Rabbi Aqiva and Bar Kokhba,” in *Approaches to Ancient Judaism*, ed. William S. Green (Chico: Scholars Press, 1980), Vol. 11, 113–130. However, in his book, 168ff, Schäfer already argued to exclude R. Akiba’s name from this translation.

560 Schäfer, “Rabbis,” 18.

561 Mantel, “Causes”; Herr, 337–339; Schäfer, “Rabbis,” 19; Adele Reinhartz, “Rabbinic Perceptions of Simeon bar Kosiba,” *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 20 (1989): 171–194; Craig Evans, “Was Simon Ben Kosiba Recognized as Messiah?,” in *Jesus and His Contemporaries: Comparative Studies*, ed. Craig Evans (Leiden: Brill, 1995): 183–211; John J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star: The Messiahs and Other Ancient Literature* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 198–204 [2nd ed., Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub., 2010]; John Gager, “Messiahs and Their Followers,” in *Toward the Millennium: Messianic Expectations from the Bible to Waco*, eds. Peter Schäfer, Marc Cohen (Leiden: Brill, 1998): 37–46.

immediate cause of the outbreak of the revolt, we should compare the description of Josephus and other sources with the figure and leadership of Bar Kokhba.

I have counted about twenty types of leaders whose names have been associated in Josephus and in other sources with messianism in its widest sense and who were active in the Land of Israel and in the Diaspora from the time of Ezekias the Galilean (when Herod was the governor of Galilee in 49 BCE) until the suppression of the Bar Kokhba revolt in 135 CE. Josephus describes the phenomenon in general, and the following are his words (after having given a description of several events that occurred in Herod's kingdom immediately after the king died):

Jewish Antiquities 17: 258:

And now Judea was filled with **bandits**, and whoever found a few men to join with him in riots was set up as a **king** and they were hasty (to inflict) disaster on the people. They aggravated the Romans (but) a little, and a few (of them) murdered their own people.

The Jewish War 11: 264–265:

Now when these were quieted, it happened, as it does in a diseased body, that another part was subject to an inflammation; for a company of deceivers and robbers got together, and persuaded the Jews to revolt, and exhorted them to assert their liberty, inflicting death on those that continued in obedience to the Roman government, and saying, that such as willingly chose slavery ought to be forced from such their desired inclinations; for they parted themselves into different bodies, and lay in wait up and down the country, and plundered the houses of the great men, and slew the men themselves, and set the villages on fire; and this till all **Judea** was filled with the effects of their madness. And thus the flame was every day more and more blown up, till it came to a direct war

A study of these descriptions of “messiahs” shows to what extent nearly all of them have the same characteristics. First, their activities are very brief and end in failure. All of them acted within confined territorial boundaries, and all had supporters who followed them and were sometimes called a “**large troop**” or a “**large gang**,” which at the end dispersed in all directions. Some declared themselves or were declared by their supporters as kings, and others treated them like royalty. Most of them are described as handsome men who excelled in “**height and strength**”

as men of “physical vigor” and “high courage” and “possessing great daring.” Josephus calls them “bandit leaders,” “scoundrels,” “sorcerers,” “liars,” “prophets,” and some of them are motivated by madness. All of them are perceived as rebels against the government and find their death in hanging, burning or crucifixion.

In order to exemplify this, I shall mention only three of them. Simeon, who was declared by (the insanity of) his supporters as *king* and wore a royal crown (JA. 17:273–277, JW 11:60); Ethronges the Shepherd, who dared to aspire to the throne, was called *king*, and wore a royal crown (of whom Josephus notes that “He himself dealt with important matters befitting a king” [JA. 17:278–284]); and Menahem, who appeared in the Temple wearing royal robes (JW 11:433–448).⁵⁶²

The characteristics of the three men mentioned above greatly resemble the descriptions of Bar Kokhba in Jewish and Christian sources. The literary sources and the archaeological finds reflect the spread of the revolt within a fairly limited area.⁵⁶³ In the Jerusalem Talmud, one statement identifies the leader of the revolt as a messiah, and the Babylonian Talmud presents him after the fact as a false messiah. Traditional sources say that he had an enormous number of supporters, and that he selected his soldiers among them after arduous and dangerous tests of ability and courage, such as cutting off a finger or uprooting oaks. He was so strong and ruthless that he killed Eleazar with a kick. From his letters, we learn that he was careful to observe all the commandments, but traditional sources blame his failure on his arrogance towards God, and he was killed by heavenly decree, by a snake that was found around his neck or on his shanks, which were the main center of his strength. It was said that “if God had not killed him, who else could have done so!” In Christian sources he is presented as one who claimed he fell from heaven in order to redeem his supporters and also as a cruel and murderous leader; like bandits, he had enormous strength and attacked anyone who did not support him.⁵⁶⁴

Although there is a great resemblance between the descriptions of these leaders, there are also some outstanding differences. Even though he acted within a limited area, he achieved military success in his battles against the Romans. His activities lasted for nearly four-and-a-half years, and he engaged

⁵⁶² See Menahem Stern, “The Leadership among the Groups of Freedom Fighters at the End of the Second Temple Period,” in *Studies in the Jewish History, The Second Temple Period*, eds. Moseh Amit, Isaiah Gafni, Mosheh D. Herr (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 1991): 300–308 [in Hebrew].

⁵⁶³ See below, the review of the Geographical Scope of the Revolt, 146–288.

⁵⁶⁴ See below, 404–405; 411–412.

large forces of the Roman army under the best of their commanders. He set up a well-ordered mechanism, by means of which he held command over the areas under his control with a high hand. Indeed, in order to suppress the revolt, the Romans were forced to bring their best commanders and elite units, which ended the revolt after a prolonged siege on Bethar and a hunt for remaining rebels in the Judean Desert.

Ben Kosiba was therefore a charismatic leader to whom scholars try to ascribe messianic qualities in the various senses of the word *messianic*, but in his letters and coins of the first year of the revolt, only the title *Prince* was attached to his name. These attempts to characterize his leadership ignore the fact that he was the leader of a fairly local revolt. His name was associated with his place of origin, Khirbet Kosiba, eight kilometers northwest of Hebron, which was the geographical focus of the revolt.⁵⁶⁵ The leader of the revolt gained the support of those who lived in that area: sages,⁵⁶⁶ priests,⁵⁶⁷ farmers, and perhaps even non-Jews. The support was the result of his personality and special abilities. According to most of the discussed sources, he had the outstanding qualities of charismatic leaders who, in times of crisis, were followed by the masses, and he led them by virtue of his personality and his special abilities.

In view of the messianic characteristics of Bar Kokhba, it appears that he does not fit the definition of a leader of a messianic movement. Messianic movements are usually created by their supporters and flourish from the ground up. Their leaders are what the movement understands them to be, and they serve as the focal point of a symbolic identity rather than a source of authority and initiative.⁵⁶⁸ This is not how the figure of Bar Kokhba is portrayed! In spite of the paucity and bias of the discussed sources, a charismatic, authoritative, and enterprising figure emerges out of them. A figure, who presumably promises to find an answer to the cumulative and continuous

565 See Schäfer, "Rabbis," 15 in which he rejects the name *Kosiba* as testifying to his place of origin.

566 See Benzion Rozenfeld, "The Sages of the Bar Kokhba's Generation and their Approach to the Revolt According to the Tanaitic Literature," in *The Path of Peace. Studies in Honor of Israel Friedman Ben Shalom*, eds. Dov Gera, Miriam Ben Zeev (Beer Sheva: Ben Gurion University Press, 2005): 319–359 [in Hebrew]. See also Noah Hacham, "Rabban Simeon ben Gamliel in Beitar," *Tarbiz* 74 (2005): 547–563 [in Hebrew].

567 David Goodblatt, "Priestly Ideologies of Judean Resistance," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 3 (1996): 225–249.

568 Yonina Talmon, "Pursuit of the Millennium: The Relation between Religious and Social Change," in *Reader in Comparative Religion: An Anthropological Approach*, 2nd eds. William A. Lessa, Evon Z. Vogt (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 528.

difficulties in the social, economic, political, national, and religious spheres; and it is all of these together that were eventually the cause for the Second Revolt.

If it was not the prohibition of circumcision or the founding of Aelia Capitolina that caused the revolt, and if the emphasis is laid on the leader of the revolt, the question then arises as to the time of the uprising. Why did Ben Kosiba launch the revolt in the year 132 in particular? In my opinion, the date of the revolt should be linked to Hadrian's visit to the region, which extended from the autumn of 129 to the summer of 130. In his itinerary, Hadrian visited Phoenicia, the Land of Israel, and Arabia. From Gaza, he took the sea route to Alexandria, from where he returned to Syria. After another visit to Provincia Asia, he visited Athens in 131–132.⁵⁶⁹ The urgent visits of Hadrian in the eastern provinces were political attempts to unify the Roman Empire. These visits were accompanied by building and development enterprises, and there is no doubt that these were an economic burden on the inhabitants of the provinces. The visits of the Caesar imposed a heavy strain on the inhabitants of the Land of Israel, who were forced, among other things, to cover the expenses of the emperor's royal retinue, as was the accepted practice. The remarks of Cassius Dio-Xiphilinius hint at the realities of the region. According to them, as long as Hadrian remained in Egypt and Syria, the Jews remained quiescent, but only after he had left the region did they rebel. They took advantage of the period between the visit of Hadrian to the region and the outbreak of the revolt to prepare the area of revolt by amassing weapons and setting up a system of refuge (Cassius Dio, 69, 12.2). The causes were therefore of a continuous nature, and the charismatic leadership of Bar Kokhba swept up his followers who joined the war against the Romans.

569 See Fergus Millar, *The Roman Near East, 31 BC–AD 337* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 105–108.

The Territorial Expansion of the Revolt: Participants and Opponents

Introduction

The territorial scope of the Second Revolt and the expansion of the area under the rule of Bar Kokhba has been treated extensively in the modern research literature. However the absence of explicit sources describing the course and area of expansion of the revolt has induced scholars to depend on a wide variety of indirect evidence such as Jewish and non-Jewish literary sources and archaeological finds. Through such sources, they have tried to determine whether a certain area within the province or outside it had participated in the revolt.

The research results were divided into two main approaches. The broad approach claimed that the revolt encompassed all of Provincia Judaea, including the Galilee, and even spread beyond it to Provincia Arabia, the eastern banks of the Jordan, and the southern parts of the neighboring Provincia Syria.¹ The narrow approach held that the revolt occurred only in Judaea and even restricted it to the area south of Jerusalem.²

These conclusions were based mainly on attempts to identify the various names in the above-mentioned sources. However, one should not rely only on a topographical analysis or an attempt to identify the place names in these sources. The territorial expansion of the revolt is closely linked with the varied

1 For a summary of this issue, see Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 22–25; Schäfer, 102–135. More recently, Werner Eck, in a series of books and articles, argued for an extended revolt. See, for example, Werner Eck, *Rom herausfordern: Bar Kochba im Kampf gegen das Imperium Romanum: Das Bild des Bar Kochba-Aufstandes im Spiegel der neuen epigraphischen Überlieferung* (Rome: Unione internazionale degli istituti di archeologia, storia e storia dell'arte, 2007). And a review article, “Der Bar Kochba-Aufstand der Jahre 132–136,” 249–265.

2 For an extensive study that located the war zone of the revolt only in Judaea, see Büchler, “Schauplätze,” 143–205. Zvi Ilan, in the daily newspaper *Davar*, May 2, 1972, 8, published an abstract of a lecture delivered by Gideon Foerster at the First Archaeological Congress held on Feb. 27–28, 1972: “Remarks on the Area of the Bar Kokhba War,” in which Foerster limited the war to the region south of Jerusalem. For Foerster's later definition of the regions of the war, see below, 158; See also Herr, “Galilee,” 68, notes 8–10. See also Menahem Mor, “The Geographical Scope of the Bar-Kokhba Revolt,” in *Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered*, 107–131.

composition of the population in Palestine during the period between the two revolts and with the internal system of relationships between it and the Roman regime. A study of these subjects will clarify: Could the rebels who had raised the flag of revolt in the area south of Jerusalem have found allies with common aims among the Jewish population in other parts of the province and among the non-Jewish population throughout the country? Or was the latter—at least part of them—hostile to the rebels, not identifying with their aims and therefore remaining passive during the revolt? Might they even have collaborated with the Romans with the hope of benefiting from their loyalty? Raising such a possibility requires us to examine how the various regions of the country were influenced by the revolt during its course and at the time of its suppression. Did the Romans treat regions that participated in the revolt badly at the stage of suppression, while other regions that had not participated in the revolt or had supported the Romans during the revolt, profited from the defeat of the Jews?

My discussion will focus on the sources and evidence used by the scholars who claimed that the Second Revolt had spread over the entire province. The examination will be conducted in geographical order, from north to south: the Galilee, Jezreel Valley, the coastal plain, Samaria and Judaea. In the discussion on Judaea, I will also deal with the question of the conquest of Jerusalem and the control over the city by the rebels. In recent years, the two provinces Arabia and Syria have been added as areas to which the revolt may have spread;³ I will examine the evidence for these regions as well. I will then deal with three components of the population in Palestine, Samaritans, Gentiles, and Judeo-Christians, and the part they played in the Second Revolt. In addition I will examine in detail Eck's opinions that the range and intensity of the revolt were related to the number of recruits in the Roman army during that period and with the direct result of the number of Roman casualties as well as the figures of Jewish fatalities in that period.

Some of the sources and evidence that have been attributed to the Second Revolt were interpreted as indicating a general uprising that involved the whole country. The implication of the sources that I will discuss later does indeed seem to be that the revolt was a general one that encompassed the country as a whole; but a closer study will make it clear that one cannot arrive at indisputable conclusions on the basis of these sources with regard to the territorial extent of the Second Revolt.

3 Eck, "Roman Point of View," 76–89.

1. *Semahot*, 8:9:

When the news that Rabbi Akiba had been executed in Caesarea and the news reached Rabbi Judah b. Baba and Rabbi Haninah b. Teradion, they rose, girded their loins with sackcloth, rent their clothes and said . . . In a short time from now no place in the land of Israel will be found where bodies of the slain have not been cast. For it is written: Speak: Thus sayeth the Lord—And the carcasses of men fall as dung upon the open field (Jer. 1x: 21). Not long thereafter, it is said Roman armies attacked and put the entire world into chaos, Within twelve months the councils of Judah came to an end; For it is written. . . . It is said that twelve months had not gone by before everything that had been foretold happened to them.⁴

Herr dated the source to the year 134 CE, and on the basis of a distinction between the two parts of the source, he determined the area of territorial expansion for the revolt. Because in the first part, Rabbi Judah b. Baba and Rabbi Haninah b. Teradion were talking about the bodies of slain people cast everywhere in the country and in the second part, about the councils that would be annulled only in Judaea, Herr found it reasonable to suppose that the reference is to the suppression of the revolt throughout the Land of Israel—and not only in Judaea.⁵

Schäfer argued, on the basis of the chronological difficulties in the source, that it does not describe a historical event and that one should not place any value on the distinction between the Land of Israel and Judaea. As proof of the geographical insignificance, of the distinction Schäfer asserted the fact that the source uses a general and meaningless phrase, *the entire world*. In this regard, Schäfer asks ironically if the author of the source meant that the entire ancient world was involved in the war in Provincia Judaea!⁶

4 Translation by D. Zlotnick, *The Tractate 'Mourning' (Semahot)* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1966), 60–61. The Hebrew text is from Heiger's edition, 154–155:

וכשנהרג רבי עקיבא בקיסרין באתה שמועה אצל רבי יהודה בן בבא ואצל רבי חנינא בן תרדיון, עמדו וחגרו את מתניהם שקים ואמרו: 'מכאן ועד ימים קלין לא ימצא מקום בארץ-ישראל שלא יהיו שם הרוגים מושלכים בו. שנאמר 'דבר כה אמר ה' ונפלה נבלת האדם כדומן על פני השדה וכעמיר מאחורי הקוצר ואין מאסף'. אמרו: 'לא היו ימים קלין עד שבא פולמוס ועירבב את כל העולם מכאן ועד שנים עשר חדש יפסקו בולאות שביהודה.

5 Herr, "Galilee," 69–70.

6 Schäfer, 103–105.

2. Eusebius, *Chronicle*:**Hadrian, Year 16:**

The Jews, who took up arms, devastated Palestine during the period in which the governor of the province was Tineus Rufus, to whom Hadrian sent an army in order to crush the rebels.⁷

3. Sulpicius Severus, *Historia Sacra*, II, 31:

Then under Hadrian the Jews attempted to rebel, and endeavored to plunder both Syria and Palestine; but on an army being sent against them, they were subdued.⁸

Both sources give the impression that the revolt encompassed all of Palestine, and according to Sulpicius Severus, even Syria was involved in it.⁹ However, these two sources do not constitute evidence for the spread of the revolt. Eusebius and Sulpicius Severus make anachronistic use, each in his own way, of the new name of the province after the suppression of the Second Revolt, *Syria-Palaestina*.¹⁰

4. Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 59: 12–14:

At first the Romans took no account of them. Soon, however, all Judaea had been stirred up, and the Jews everywhere were showing signs of disturbance, were gathering together, and giving evidence of great hostility to the Romans, partly by secret and partly by overt acts; many outsider nations, too, were joining them through eagerness for gain, and the whole earth, one might almost say, was being stirred up over the matter. Then, indeed, Hadrian sent against them generals. First of these was

7 See Eusebius Werke, Bd. 7. *Die Chronik des Hieronymus*, an 117, Rudolph Helm, ed. (Berlin De Gruyter 1913–1926). See the Armenian translation, Joseph Karst, *Eusebius Werke v, Die Chronik* (GCS Band 20), (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1902), 219–221: “The Jews revolted and attacked the land of Palestine.”

8 Sulpicius Severus, *Historia Sacra*, II, 31 (PL T. 20, Col. 46).

9 Stern, *Authors*, II. 403.

10 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 600; Abramski, 103; Oppenheimer, “Galilee in the Revolt,” 230; Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 80, note 201; Schäfer, 134.

Julius Severus, who was dispatched from Britain, where he was governor, against the Jews.¹¹

The two matters referred to by Cassius Dio raise a number of questions and debate regarding the source as a whole. First, the names that Cassius used to describe the area of expansion for the revolt. Second, the figures he gives for the fatal losses of the Jews in the revolt. From the names and terms *all Judaea*, *Judaea as a whole*, *the whole earth*, Alon deduced that the revolt had spread throughout Provincia Judaea. In his opinion, the non-Jewish sources do not use the name *Judaea* to describe the narrower area of Judah alone, but the entire province.¹² Büchler, on the other hand, ascribed the names and terms only to the area of Judah.¹³ A conclusive decision on the evidence of Cassius is rather difficult,¹⁴ especially because of the figures he gives of the Jewish losses: "Five hundred and eighty thousand men were slain in the various raids and battles, and the number of those that perished by famine, disease and fire was past finding out."¹⁵ These numbers seem to imply that the revolt did indeed encompass the entire province and not only the limited area of Judah. The main questions about the figures of Cassius Dio is to what extent they are reliable and on what sources he based his description of the Second Revolt. Other scholars have claimed that Cassius Dio derived his figures from official records, such as the report of Hadrian to the Senate¹⁶ or the report of the Senate regarding the honors given to Julius Severus.¹⁷ Others linked the figures with the biography of Hadrian.¹⁸ However since the above assumptions have not yet been irrefutably

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- 11 Translation by Earnest Cary, *The Loeb Classical Library* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1925), vol. VIII, 447–451.
 - 12 See Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 595–597. For the use of the name *Judaea*, see Stern, *Authors*, II, 351, 403; David Goodblatt, "From Judeans to Israel: Names of Jewish States in Antiquity," *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period* 29 (1998): 1–36.
 - 13 Büchler, *Schauplätze*, 145–146.
 - 14 Smallwood, 442, argued: "In this context Dio's phrase 'the Whole of Judaea,' most probably means the whole province, not merely Judaea proper." However, on page 457, note 113, in regard to the description of the destruction of whole Judaea in 14.1–2, she asked: "But does Judaea here mean the province, as apparently in LXIX, 13.1, or Judaea proper?"
 - 15 Cassius Dio 59: 14.1.
 - 16 Fergus Millar, *The Study of Cassius Dio* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), 62.
 - 17 P.W. Opitz, *PW* (1932), col. 1815, s. v. Minicius; Anthony R. Birley, *The Roman Government of Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 129–133.
 - 18 Emil Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes in Zeitalter Jesus Christi* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1901), I, 674–675.

established, then the sources that were supposedly used by Cassius Dio for his figures do not indicate that they are dependable. Moreover, in view of the fact that Cassius Dio's passage was from an abridgement made by a monk of the eleventh century, John Xiphilinus, there is no guarantee that the figures stated were identical to those cited originally by Cassius Dio.

In spite of these difficulties, Applebaum based his discussion about the range of the revolt on the number of villages and fortresses mentioned by Cassius Dio, even though he claimed that they were exaggerated. He came to the conclusion, on the basis of this number, that the revolt not only encompassed Judah, but spread northwards to the regions of Samaria and the Lower Galilee and reached as far as the road from Tiberias to Sepphoris. He also thought that the revolt had an influence on Peraea in the east and Idumea in the south.¹⁹ In order to verify the figures of Cassius Dio, Applebaum relied on the findings of an archaeological survey in Judaea and Samaria that had been conducted in 1967/1968.²⁰ Using the survey results and calculations of population density, land fertility, and water supply, Applebaum concluded that the number of sites during the Roman period was 585 and that the population comprised 552,427 inhabitants, covering Judah (the area of Hebron only), Benjamin, the mountains of Ephraim, the region of Ephraim and Manasseh, the Judean Desert, and the central part of the Jordan Valley.²¹ The survey did not include the Jerusalem corridor and the areas to the west of the 1967 borders; but Applebaum assumed that if these areas had been surveyed, the number of sites would have risen to the number noted by Cassius Dio.²²

The criticism against Applebaum for citing numbers far lower than those of Cassius Dio focused mainly on two points: First, not every site mentioned in the survey was inhabited and destroyed specifically during the Second Revolt. Determining the dates of habitation and destruction is complicated because the findings at the various sites were very sparse. Sometimes it was possible to date a find only in a very general manner, perhaps to ascribe it only

19 Applebaum, *Prolegomena* 25, 35; Stern, *Authors*, II, 402–403. on the basis of the numbers of the destroyed villages and strongholds, he argues that the revolt was not limited to Judaea; however, he does not indicate its spreading.

20 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 34–35. On the archaeological survey, see Kokhavi, *Judea, Samaria and the Golan*.

21 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 34–35.

22 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 35. See Kokhavi, *Judea, Samaria and the Golan*, 13. He indicates that “the report of the survey is not completed, other than a summary of the main information of the surveyed region, in a relatively short period. Additional stages of the survey include completions to the regions which we surveyed in the first phase and of survey of new regions.”

to the Roman period. Second, the number of inhabitants in the surveyed area, according to the calculations of Applebaum, was much lower than the number of people killed according to Cassius Dio, and the number he gave included only male soldiers and fighters, not the civilian population. We should not regard the figures of Cassius Dio on the settlements that were destroyed and the number of people killed as reflecting historical reality, nor should we derive from them that the revolt had spread beyond the area of Judah to all the other regions of Provincia Judaea.²³

The exaggerations of Cassius Dio in describing the ending of the revolt stem from the apologetic tone that is obvious in the entire section on the Second Revolt. The many obstacles encountered by the Roman forces during their suppression of the revolt and their heavy losses forced him to overemphasize the figures relating to its outcome. If these numbers were indeed reliable, it means that Provincia Judaea was totally destroyed and that nearly all its inhabitants were exterminated. However, even if the outcome of the revolt was severe, it cannot be regarded as having resulted in destruction and total annihilation, especially in view of the recovery of Palestine Jewry in various regions after the suppression of the revolt.²⁴

From the sources and figures reviewed above, it is not possible to determine with certainty whether the revolt had been restricted to the area of Judah or perhaps had spread throughout the province. Therefore, I will transfer my study, as mentioned above, to a discussion of the sources and evidence that research has used with regard to the other regions of the province and beyond it as well.²⁵

2.1 Areas of Jewish Population

2.1.1 *The Galilee*

The participation of the Galilee population in the Bar Kokhba revolt is a matter of debate among the scholars dealing with the Second Revolt.²⁶ Those who extended the range of the revolt to the area of the Galilee based their suppositions mainly on Jewish and non-Jewish literary sources and on archaeological evidence. Below, I will review these sources and evidence and clarify their

23 Schäfer, 132–133.

24 See below, 468–474.

25 For a bibliography for the expansion of the revolt over the whole province, see Yeivin, 67–104; Herr, “Galilee,” 68, notes 6–11; and see Eck’s extensive publications.

26 See Oppenheimer, “Galilee,” 234–237; Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 22–23.

degree of historical reliability and the claims deduced from them regarding the part played by the Galilee in the revolt.

Literary Sources

In the sources that relate to the period of the Second Revolt and its outcome, the names of settlements that are mentioned were identified as settlement sites in the Galilee. On the basis of their location, a few scholars have extended the range of the revolt to the Galilee. However, the main problem in this approach arises from the difficulties involved in the identity and location of settlements with similar names in other parts of the country. The identity of these settlements is therefore uncertain and so one cannot attribute any historical significance to the sources in which they are mentioned. These sources have been collected by Oppenheimer,²⁷ but in view of the difficulties I mentioned, it is worth reexamining them and trying to determine their contribution to the question regarding the participation of the Galilee in the Second Revolt.

Non-Jewish Sources

In Christian sources there is a wealth of references to the subject of the Second Revolt, but the Galilee as an arena for the Second Revolt is mentioned in only one source:

1. Jerome, *Homily 88*, On the birth of the Lord:

Then Hadrian came, and, because another revolution of the Jews broke out in Galilee, he laid waste what had remained of the city. He further proclaimed by law that no Jew was permitted to approach Jerusalem.²⁸

These words of Jerome (Hieronymus) suggest that during the reign of Hadrian, the Jews in the Galilee rebelled during the Second Revolt. Yet the testimony of Jerome makes no contribution to our subject, since his words concern the situation in his own times, the fourth century CE, when most of the Jews were living in Galilee and Jerusalem was a gentile city to which entry was forbidden to Jews. Jerome may have been writing under the impact of the events during the Gallus revolt and mistakenly attributed the events to the period of the Bar

²⁷ Oppenheimer, "Galilee," 234–237.

²⁸ Hieronymus, *De Nativitate Domini*, CCL LXXVIII, 528; translated by M. Liguori Ewald, *The Homilies of Saint Jerome* (Wash., D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1966), 226.

Kokhba revolt. Therefore, this source contains no evidence for the participation of the Galilee in the Second Revolt.²⁹

2. Apollodorus, *Poliorcetica*³⁰

According to its introduction, the book by the architect Apollodorus, *Poliorcetica*, was written in reply to a letter by Hadrian in which the emperor asked how one could fight against an enemy that did not have fixed fortifications but fought from among mountain ridges and crags.³¹ Yeivin linked the book of Apollodorus to the Galilee and found evidence in it—the reference to methods of warfare in mountainous regions—for the final stages in the suppression of the revolt in the Galilee. According to Yeivin, after the conquest of the Galilee by the Romans, some pockets of resistance remained, especially in the ravines and rock crevices, and in order to clear them out, the Romans needed a guide for warfare methods in such regions.³²

The connection between the letter of Hadrian and the reply of Apollodorus and the Bar Kokhba revolt was rejected by a number of scholars, who preferred to relate it to the repressive activities in Mauretania in 122 CE.³³ Smallwood accepted this assumption, based on the words of Apollodorus, that he did not know the region which the emperor wished to subdue.³⁴ Other scholars who assume that the question of Hadrian referred to the events of the Second Revolt,³⁵ also do not agree with Yeivin regarding the stage in the course of the revolt when the emperor requested the advice of Apollodorus. In their view,

29 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 600; Schäfer, 133.

30 See Philip Henry Blyth, "Apollodorus of Damascus and the *Poliorcetica*," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 33 (1992): 127–158; David Whitehead, "Apollodorus' *Poliorcetica*: Author, Date, Dedicatee," in *Roman Miscellany, Essays in Honour of Anthony R. Birley on His Seventieth Birthday*, eds. Vera E. Hirschmann, Andreas Kriekhaus, Hans Michael Schellenberg (Gdansk: Foundation for the Development of Gdansk University for the Department of Archaeology Gdansk University, 2008), 204–212.

31 Apollodorus, *Poliorcetica*, Introduction; see Stern, *Authors*, II, 136.

32 Yeivin, 96.

33 See Yeivin, 223, note 110, citing Alon and Applebaum's review of his book in *Journal of Jewish Studies* 1 (1948): 148.

34 Smallwood, 452, note 93; Stern, *Authors*, II, 134. Stern rejected Smallwood's interpretation, and argued that Apollodorus was well familiar with Thrace.

35 Smallwood, 451–452; Stern, *Authors*, II, 134–135, with additional bibliography. See also Bernard W. Henderson, *The Life and Principate of the Emperor Hadrian* (London: Methuen, 1923), 230, 248; Fergus Millar, *A Study of Cassius Dio* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), 64–65; Wilhelm Weber, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Kaisers Hadrianus* (Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1907), 74, note 260, 276, note 1013.

the letter was addressed to Apollodorus in the final stages of the suppression of the revolt when the Jewish rebels had centered themselves in the mountainous regions of Judah in the fortress of Herodion, the fortress of Bethar, and the caves of the Judean Desert.³⁶

Jewish Sources on Incidents of Revolt in the Galilee

1. *JT*, Ta'aniot 4, 69a (see above, 98–102)

I dealt above with the source that described the actions of two brothers from Kefar Haruba, their clash with the Roman authorities, and their desire to take the crown of Hadrian and place it on the head of Simon.³⁷ Here I wish to expand the discussion on the question of the identity and location of Kefar Haruba with Kefar Harub in the vicinity of Sussita (Hippus).³⁸ This identification allowed Yeivin to regard the area of Sussita as the place where the standard of rebellion was raised and from where it spread throughout the Galilee.³⁹ However, Kefar Haruva was also located in various places throughout Judah; for example, Alon located it between Lod and Sha'alvim,⁴⁰ and Applebaum, near Bethlehem.⁴¹ Gichon located it in the Judean plain,⁴² and Foerster identified Ein Haruv with Kefar Haruva.⁴³ The attempts to locate Kefar Haruva in Judah is preferable to the attempt by Yeivin, since all are located in the region of Judah where the rebels were undoubtedly active.

2. *Lamentations Rabba*, 1:5:

Hadrian (may his bones be crushed!) stationed three guard posts, one in Hammat and one in Bethlehem and one in Kefar Leqitaia. . . . He caught here, and anyone who tries to escape there will be caught there'. He used to send out heralds to proclaim, that if there is a Jew in the place, he should come out, [because] the king wants to give him some-

36 Smallwood, 451–452.

37 See above, 97–99.

38 See Yeivin, 73–74, 218, note 39. *Tabula Imperii Romani, Iudaea Palestina*, entry: Kefar Harub, 163: “in the region of Sussita a village named Kefar Harub.”

39 Yeivin, 73–74.

40 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 599. Oppenheimer, “Galilee,” 227. See also Büchler, “Schauplätze,” 163; Klein, *Land of Judaea*, 168; Klein, *Sefer Ha-Yishuv*, 92.

41 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 17, 22.

42 See Mordechai Gichon, “The Bar Kochba War: A Colonial Uprising against Imperial Rome (131/2–135),” *Revue Internationale d'Histoire Militaire* 42 (1979): 82–97.

43 On Foerster's lecture, see above, Note 2.

thing... [those] who looked around, did not come out, and those who did not look around all went into the Valley of Bet Rimmon. He said to the general of his army: 'By the time I eat this piece of bread and the leg of this chicken I do not want one of them to be found.' Immediately his legions surrounded them and killed them and their blood rose and flowed to the River Cypros, and the Holy Spirit screamed and said: 'Over these I weep' (Lamentations 1:16). Those of them who were in hiding, ate the flesh of their dead (companions).⁴⁴

In the research literature, there is no consensus on the identification of the three guard posts that Hadrian had stationed in order to block the routes for the retreating rebels, nor for the identification of the gathering place of those who were captured by the Romans. Once again, the scholars have tried to determine the extent of the revolt area by various place name identifications. A possible connection with the Galilee, which can be found in *Lamentations Rabba*, appears in the version of the Buber edition that notes that one of the guard posts was in Hamat Gader.⁴⁵ Identifying Hammata with Hamath near Tiberias⁴⁶ and the Beit Rimmon Valley in the Lower Galilee with Wadi Ramana south of the Beit Netofa Valley might also provide the possible connection.⁴⁷ However, the location of Hammata and the Beit Rimmon Valley in the Galilee area makes it difficult to identify the other two guard posts. Since the interest of the source was in the setting up of three guard posts to block the retreat of

44 Oppenheimer, "Hideouts," 257; חדא, "הדריאנוס שחיק עצמות הושיב שלש משמרות, חדא, בחמתא וחדא בכפר לקיטיא וחד בבית אל דיהוד [מהדורת כובר: אדריאנוס שחיק עצמות הושיב שלש משמרות: אחת בחמת גדר, ואחת יתצד הכא ודערוק מן הכא יתצד מן הכא, והוה מפיק כרוזין ומכריזין ואומרים בבית לחם, ואחת בכפר לקטיא] אמר: דערוק מן הכא אין דאית יהודאי ייתי דמלכא בעו למית ליה מילא... דאיתבוננו לא נפקו ואילין דלא איתבוננו נכנסו כולהון לבקעת בית רימון [מהדורת בובר: ... נכנסו כולהון בחדא בקעתא] אמר לשר-צבא שלו עד שאני אוכל קרן גלוסקיון זו וירק דתרנגול זה אבקש אחד מהן ולא אמצא. מיד הקיפם לגיונותיו והרגום והיה הדם בוקע והולך עד שהגיע לקיפרוס נהר, ורוח הקדש צווחת ואומרת 'על אלה אני בוכיה'. אילין דהוי חבושין מנהון אבלין בשר קטילהון"

45 *Gazetteer*, 54, entry: Emmatha Εμμαθα could be replaced by *Imperii Romani Iudaea-Palestina*: Iudaea, Palaestina: Eretz Israel in the Hellenistics, Roman and Byzantine period. Maps and Gazetteer, ed. by Yoram Tsafrir, Leah Di Segni and Judith Green, Jerusalem 1994.

46 *Gazetteer*, 64, entry: Hammath Αμμαθος.

47 *Gazetteer*, 91, entry: Rimmon III. The identification of the Beit Rimmon Valley with the Beit Netofa Valley does not correspond with the source. This identification fits better with the first meeting place of the rabbis in Galilee after the revolt. See Oppenheimer, "Galilee," 80, note 9. In opposition to this, see Shmuel Safrai, "The Localities of the Sanctification of Lunar Months and the Intercalation of Years in Palestine after 70 CE," *Tarbiz* 35(1967): 30 [in Hebrew].

the rebels, an attempt was made to locate them on one of the main roads of strategic value to the Romans, especially during the final stages of the revolt in the area of Judah.⁴⁸

One suggestion was to identify the location of the guard posts with Bethel,⁴⁹ Beit Lykia,⁵⁰ (identified with Kefar Lekitaya, 7 km northeast of Emmaus), and Emmaus (which is also called Hammata in the source).⁵¹ This proposal locates the three guard posts on the Emmaus-Jerusalem road that connected on the mountain slopes with the Bethel-Jerusalem road.⁵² The identification indicates that this was the road that the Romans had blocked against the fleeing rebels from the northern part of Judah; the Romans wanted to guard the road in order to bar the escape route of those who had been holed up in Bethar.⁵³ Oppenheimer, who accepted this identification, locates the Beit Rimmon Valley in the region of the Arab village Rimon⁵⁴ (10 km from Ramallah, south-east of the Baal Hazor mountain). Zeev Safrai tried to locate the three guard posts in areas in which the rebels had an escape route from the battlefield.⁵⁵ He thought the direction for their flight was mainly northward; so in his opinion, one should search for Kefar Lekitaya toward the northern borders of Judah. He therefore identified it with Khirbet al-Kut, about one kilometer northeast of Ma'ale Levona.⁵⁶ The guard post here was meant to bar the escape route of the rebels northward, the guard post in Bethel isolated the desert area from the mountain slopes, while the guard post in Hammath (Emmaus) blocked the

48 Zeev Safrai, *The Galilee in the Time of the Mishna and Talmud* (Ma'alot: Midreshet shorashim, 1981, 74–75 [in Hebrew]. Without referring to this source, Safrai locates Bik'at Beth Rimmon in Galilee.

49 As opposed to the reading of the Buber ed.: "Bethlehem."

50 Klein, *Land of Judaea*, 165; *Gazetteer*, 72, entry: Kefar Lekitaia.

51 *Gazetteer*, 55, entry: Emmaus.

52 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 55.

53 Michael Avi Yonah, "The Roman Road System," *Israel Exploration Journal* 1(1950): 58.

54 Oppenheimer, "Hideouts," 25. He also identifies "Cyprus River" in the region of Wadi Kelt, which led towards Cyprus. For a similar identification of the Beit Rimmon Valley, See Yaakov A. Efrati, "From Yavneh to Usaha," *Sinai* 77 (1975): 42. For a different identification of the Beit Rimmon Valley, see Büchler, *Schauplätze*, 204, note 3, that identified the place southern to Beit Guvrin. Amos Kloner, "The Synagogue at Horvat Rimmon," *Proceedings of the 8th World Congress of Jewish Studies* 8 (1992): vol. 1, 7–9 identified the Valley of Rimmon with Hurvat Um a-Rummin in the Southern Judaeian foothills. See also Kloner, *Tepper*, 368–370.

55 Zeev Safrai, *Historical Geography of Samaria during the Roman-Byzantine Period*, diss. (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1978), 235–236.

56 Kokhavi, *Judea, Samaria and the Golan*, 169, no. 37.

flight path of the rebels towards the coastal plain.⁵⁷ Foerster, who restricts the range of the revolt,⁵⁸ places the three guard posts in the southern part of Judah, on the road between Halhul and Tekoa. He, like Zeev Safrai, identified Kefar Lekitaya with Khirbet al-Kut, which lies at a strategic point on the top of a hill near the road that overlooks the slope rising from the valley Habracha to the higher mountains in the area of Halhul and Beit Zur, not far from Khirbet Aruv between Bethlehem and Hebron.⁵⁹ This identification implies the identification of Hammata with Hamat in 'Judah,'⁶⁰ which is mentioned in the Plain of Zoar south of the Dead Sea, a place where there are hot springs and the remains of two Roman camps.⁶¹

3. JT, Ta'aniot 4,6, 69a:

Three villages the census covering them [their Ketemos קטמוס.⁶² in the parallel version in *Lamentation Rabba* 2:4: Times טימס] had to be brought up to Jerusalem in a wagon. These three were Kabul, Shihin, and Migdol Sebayya [in the parallel version in *Lamentation Rabba*: Magdala] All three of them were destroyed.

Said R. Yohanan, there were eighty stores of those who weave material for traveling cloaks (פלגס) in Migdol Sebayya.⁶³

Said R. Yohanan, there were eighty stores selling food preserved in the condition of cultic cleanness in Kefar Imra.⁶⁴ [in the parallel version in *Lamentations Rabba*—R. Huna said: There were three hundred stalls of

57 Safrai (above, note 55).

58 See Foerster (above, note 2).

59 Kokhavi, *Judea, Samaria and the Golan*, 50, no. 79.

60 Büchler, "Schauplätze," 204; *Midrash, Song of Songs Zutah*, 6:9.

61 See Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 55.

62 Uzi Leibner, "A Galilean-Geography Midrash on the Journey of Jobs Servant-Lads," *Cathedra* 120(2006): 34, note 2, interpreting *Ketemos Times* as deriving from the τραπεζα donation for taxes.

63 Leibner, *ibid.*, פלגס, According to Daniel Sperber, *Material Culture in Eretz-Israel during the Talmudic Period*, (Jerusalem 1994), 134, it is a kind of cloth.

64 Translation of Jacob Neusner, *Talmud of the Land of Israel*, vol. 18: Besah and Taanit, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

"שלוש עיירות היו קטמוס [במקבילה באיכה רבה, ב ד טימס] שלהן עולה לירושלים בעגלה: כבול ושיחין ומגדל צבעייה [במקבילה באיכה רבה: מגדלא]—ושלושתן חרבו. אמר ר' יוחנן: שמונים חנויות של אורגי פלגס היו במגדל צבעייה. אמר ר' יוחנן: שמונים חנויות של מוכרי טהרות היו בכפר אימרא."

sellers of birds for ritual purification in Magdala of the Dyers and there were three hundred stalls of curtain-weavers in Kefar Nimra.⁶⁵

Yeivin attributed the two sources to the time of the Bar Kokhba revolt, and in his view, they constitute evidence for the stage of suppression by Severus. Since Yeivin thought that the Galilee had taken part in the revolt, the first military activities of Severus must have been focused on the Galilee. According to Yeivin, Severus attacked the Galilee from two directions. The attack from the west was by using the forces that had been brought from outside Judaea and were massed in Acre. From the east, he attacked with the legion that had been stationed in Bosra in Provincia Arabia. In both sources, Yeivin found key defense points in the Galilee that had been destroyed during the suppression of the revolt:⁶⁶ in the west, Kabul⁶⁷ and Shihin,⁶⁸ and in the east, Magdala, Migdal Sebayya,⁶⁹ and Kefar Nimra.⁷⁰ Regarding Kabul, Yeivin also mentions *Kochava*, which he believes was the birthplace of the leader of the revolt, Bar Kokhba.⁷¹

Despite the difficulties in identifying some of the places mentioned above, most scholars agree with their Galilean locations. However, for chronological reasons I must reject these sources as evidence for the part played by the Galilee in the Second Revolt: the settlements mentioned in the source were destroyed during the Great Revolt and the source cannot be attributed to the days of the Bar Kokhba revolt.

The situation described in the source regarding the transfer of contributions or taxes to Jerusalem is relevant only to the period before the destruction. The claim of Yeivin that these taxes and contributions were brought to Jerusalem even during the Second Revolt while Jerusalem was under the control of the

65 Translated by A. Cohen, (London: Soncino Press, 1939), 163.

ר' הונא אמר: ושלוש מאות חנויות של מוכרי טהרות היו במגדל דצבעייא ושלוש מאות חנויות של אורגי פרוכות היו בכפר נמרה

66 Yeivin, 89–93.

67 *Tabula Imperii Romani, Iudaea Palestina*, 102–103, entry: Chabulon.

68 *Tabula Imperii Romani, Iudaea Palestina*, 70, entry: Asochis Shihin.

69 Yeivin, 92, identifies *Magdala* with Migdal Nunia, whereas Migdal Şebayya with א-דויר on the entering of the Yarmuk river into the Jordanian plain. See Leibner, above, note 62. Against this identification, see Avi Yonah, *Gazetteer*, 99, entry: Taricheae, Magdala. See also *Tabula Imperii Romani, Iudaea Palestina*, 173, entry: Magdala, Taricheae Migdal Nunia, Migda Şebaya.

70 Yeivin, 29, identifies *Kefar Nimra* with Nimrin, southwest of the Arbel valley. See *Tabula Imperii Romani, Iudaea Palestina*, 164, entry: Kefar Nimra.

71 Yeivin, 92. *Tabula Imperii Romani, Iudaea Palestina*, 105, entry: Cochaba.

rebels,⁷² is based on the assumption that the rebels had indeed conquered the city, controlled it, and even renewed the cultic rites. This assumption has not yet been given serious authentication.⁷³ Also, Yeivin's identification of the birthplace of the leader of the revolt with the town of Kochava in the Galilee is not reasonable at all in view of our enriched knowledge from the Wadi Murabba'at letters, which indicate that the name of the leader was Shimon ben Coseba.⁷⁴ The attempt to link his name with the place of his birth, supposedly with Kochava in the Beit Netofa Valley, originates in the dispute that preceded the discovery of the letters and dealt with the question of whether the name of the leader was Ben Koziba or Bar Kokhba.⁷⁵ According to the letters, the name is Ben Coseba, and if this name is indeed linked to his place of birth, then it would be preferable to identify this place with Khirbet Kosiba in Judah, between Tekoa and Halhul.⁷⁶

Jewish Sources Describing the Outcome of the Revolt in the Galilee

1. *Mishna*, Pe'ah 7:1:

If an olive tree in a field has its special fame, such as an olive tree yielding much oil in its season, and it is forgotten, the law of Forgotten Sheaf does not apply to it. This applies only to [a tree having] its [special] name, or its [special] works, or its [special] place; its name—that it was a 'Shifkoni' or 'Beshani' tree; its works—that it yielded much; and its place—that it

72 Yeivin, 236, note 52.

73 See below 249–288.

74 For the first publication of his name, see *DJD* II, no. 24B, 2–33, 9 (p. 124); C, 3, 8 (p. 128); E, 2, 7 (p. 131); 43, 1 (p. 160); See also *Text from Nahal Hever*, X.Ḥev/Se 13, p. 67, line 2; X.Ḥev/Se 30, p. 104, lines 1–2; X.Ḥev/Se 36, p. 112, line 1; X.Ḥev/Se 49, p. 121, lines 2–3. See also Esther Eshel, Hanan Eshel, Georg Geiger, "Mur 174: A Hebrew I.O.U. Document from Wadi Murabba'at," *Liber Annuus* 58(2008): 313–326. Georg Geiger, "Papyrusfragmente, evtl. aus dem Wadi Murabba'at," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 19 (2012): 216–217, On *Papyrus Mur*, 174.

75 Herr, "Causes," 2, notes 3–4. For a discussion about the name of the revolt leader, see Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Bar Cochba Period," *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* (Missoula, Mont.: Society of Biblical Literature: distributed by Scholars' Press, [1974], 311–312. See more recently Boaz Zissu, Erasmus Gass, "The identification of Biblical Achzib at 'Khirbet 'En el-Kizbe' in the Judean Shephelah, and the Origins of Shimon Bar Kokhba," in *Go Out and Study the Land* (*Judges 18:2*); *Archaeological, Historical and Textual Studies in Honor of Hanan Eshel*, eds. Aren M. Maeir, Judy Magness, and Lawrence H. Schiffman (Leiden: Brill, 2012): 377–426.

76 Kokhavi, *Judea, Samaria and the Golan*, 50, no. 83; Khirbet Koizva, south of Wadi El Arub.

stood beside the winepress or the gap in the wall. But as for other olive trees; if two of them were forgotten, the law of the Forgotten Sheaf applies; but if three, it does not apply. R. Jose says: 'The law of the Forgotten Sheaf does not apply to olive trees.'⁷⁷

2. *TJ. Pe'ah*, 7, 20a:

R. Yose says the restrictions of the forgotten sheaf do not apply to olive trees at all. Said R. Simeon ben Yakim, 'R. Yose stated this rule only with regard to former times, when olives were rare because Hadrian the wicked devastated (החריב) the boundaries of the Land of Israel.'⁷⁸

Sources 1 and 2 deal with the laws of the forgotten sheaf. Rabbi Yose ben Ḥalafta of Sepphoris,⁷⁹ one of the leading sages in Usha after the Bar Kokhba revolt, determined that the law of the forgotten sheaf did not apply to olive trees. According to Oppenheimer, the regulations and laws of the Usha generation reflect historical realities of the period after the Bar Kokhba revolt. He interprets the law of Rabbi Yose in the light of the situation that prevailed after the Second Revolt. This situation is described in the words of Rabbi Simeon ben Yakim, who attributed the ruling of Rabbi Yose to the damage caused to olive tree plantations (the primary cultivation in the Galilee area) during the course of the Second Revolt.⁸⁰

A similar interpretation is proposed by Oppenheimer for the following sources from Rabbi Yose that, in his opinion, reflect the damage to agriculture in the Galilee and thus caused an economic recession:⁸¹

77 Translation by Danby.

משנה, פאה ז א: "כל זית שיש לו שם בשדה, אפילו כזית הנטופה בשעתו ושכחו—אינו שכחה. במה דברים אמורים? בשמו ובמעשיו ובמקומו: בשמו—שהיה שפכוני או בישני. במעשיו—שהוא עושה הרבה. במקומו—שהוא עומד בצד הגת או בצד הפרצה ושאר כל הזיתים—שניים שכחה ושלשה אינן שכחה. ר' יוסי אומר אין שכחה לזיתים."

78 Translation of Roger Brooks, *Talmud of the Land of Israel*, vol. 2 *Peah* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 273.

ירושלמי, פאה ז, כ ע"א: "ר' יוסי אומר: אין שכחה לזיתים. אמר רבי שמעון בן יקים: לא אמר רבי יוסי אלא בראשונה שלא היו הזיתים מצויין שבא הדריאנוס הרשע והחריב את כל הארץ, אבל עכשיו שהזיתים מצויין יש להן שכחה."

79 According to Schäfer, R. Yose the Galilean died before the Bar Kokhba Revolt.

80 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 601; Oppenheimer, "Galilee," 232; idem, "Bar Kokhba Revolt," 63.

81 Oppenheimer, "Galilee," 232.

3. *Tosefta* Shebiit 7:18:

When must they keep off paths in the field [of others] after the second rainfall? R. Yose says, 'Under what circumstances [does this rule apply]?' When the years proceed regularly. Now that the years become cursed even if it has rained only once. They must walk.

Rabban Simeon b. Gamliel says: 'rains which fall continually for seven days without stopping are considered equivalent [in amount] to [that which falls during] the second rainfall.'⁸²

4. *TB, Bava Bathra*, 75, 2:

It has been taught: R. Jose said: 'I saw Sepphoris in its prosperity, and it contained a hundred and eighty thousand markets for pudding dealers.'⁸³

The only connection between sources 1 and 2 and the Galilee was the Galilean origins of Rabbi Yose and Rabbi Simeon.⁸⁴ The Mishna does not explain the motive for the halachic ruling by Rabbi Yose, while Rabbi Simeon ben Yakim, an Amora of the third generation, attributes this ruling to the damage done by Hadrian to olive tree plantations throughout the country, not specifically in the Galilee.⁸⁵

If we accept the evidence of Rabbi Simeon ben Yakim,⁸⁶ these two sources do not refer to the Galilee at all as a region damaged by the course of the revolt or by the punitive measures of Hadrian, and for this reason I have to reject them as evidence for the participation of the Galilee in the revolt. On this issue, it is preferable to adopt the view of Mantel, who understood from the fact that Hadrian had cut down only olive trees, that his intention was to build dykes,

82 "מאימתי פורשין משבילין שבשדות עד שתדיר רביעה שניה. אמר רבי יוסי במה דברים אמורים? בזמן שהשנים כתיקנן, עכשיו שנתקנסו שנים אפילו לא ירד אלא גשם אחד בלבד [אין] צריך להלך"

Trans. Louis E. Newman, in Jacob Neusner, ed. *The Tosefta*, (Peabody Mass., 2002), vol. I, 245.

83 "תניא א"ר יוסי אני ראיתי צפורי בשלוותה והיו בה מאה ושמונים אלף שווקים של מוכרי ציקי קדירה."

84 Oppenheimer, *ibid.*

85 Schäfer, 112; Büchler, "Schauplätze," 159. According to Büchler, "All the Land," means all the world. See also Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 601, note 30; Stern, *Authors*, 11, 403, who connected this source with the evidence of Sulpicius Severus.

86 Schäfer, 112. According to him, the sayings of the third century Amora cannot be considered as historical information reflecting second-century events.

and therefore there was no need to attribute the destruction of olive trees in the Galilee specifically to the results of the revolt there.⁸⁷ We actually have evidence of Hadrian cutting down trees during this period outside the borders of Palestine, in the Lebanese mountains.⁸⁸ The trees there were apparently used to build ships.⁸⁹ In view of these facts, it is worth associating the cutting down of olive trees in the Galilee to the war efforts of Hadrian in Judaea and not to attribute his actions to the participation of the Galilee in the Second Revolt.

5. *BT*, Yevamot 96b:

Thereupon R. Ammi and R. Assi came in and said to him: 'Did it not happen at the Synagogue of Tiberias that R. Eleazar and R. Jose disputed [so hotly] concerning a door bolt which had a knob at one end that they tore a Scroll of the Law in their excitement.' 'They tore'? Could this be imagined! Say rather 'That a Scroll of the Law was torn in their excitement.' R. Jose b. Kisma who was then present exclaimed, 'I shall be surprised if this Synagogue is not turned into a house of idolatry,' and so it happened. [On hearing this] he was annoyed all the more. 'Comradeship too' he exclaimed.⁹⁰

Oppenheimer, in his collection of sources on the participation of the Galilee in the revolt, included this source among those testifying to the destruction of the Galilee. The conversion of a synagogue in Tiberias into a place for idol worship was one of the general results of the revolt and the annihilation decrees that came in its wake.⁹¹ However, in his study on the Jewish settlements in

87 Mantel, "Causes," 55.

88 For inscriptions on forests from Mt. Lebanon, see Asad Rustum, "New Traces of the Old Lebanon Forest," *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement* (1922): 68–71; see the inscription *IMP.HAD.NILAUG*. The engraved numbers, according to its publisher, was a sign for the uprooting of the trees; see René Paul Mouterde, "Dates des inscriptions forestières d'Hadrien au Liban," *Mélanges de l'Université Saint Joseph* 25(1942/43): 41–47; idem, "Les Inscriptions d'Hadrien à Trachich et au Wadi Brissa," *Mélanges de l'Université Saint Joseph* 34 (1957): 230–234.

89 Smallwood, 449, where she indicates the exploiting of the forests on Mt. Lebanon for the building of ships during Pompey's reign. See Vegetius, v, 4; Caesar, *Bell Civ.* III.

90 "... אמרו ליה: לא כך היה המעשה בבית הכנסת של טבריה בנגר שיש בראשו גלוסטרא שנחלקו בו רבי אלעזר ורבי יוסי עד שקרעו ספר תורה בחמתו, קרעו, ס"ד, אלא אימא שנקרע ס"ת בחמתו, והיה שם רבי יוסי בן קיסמא, אמר: תמיה אני אם לא יהיה בית הכנסת זו עבודת כוכבים. וכן הוה."

91 Oppenheimer, "Galilee," 223.

the Galilee, Oppenheimer attributed this source to the period after the War of Quietus and linked the conversion of the synagogue into a place of pagan idolatry with the Hellenization of the cities of Tiberias and Sepphoris by Hadrian during his visit to the country in 119 CE.⁹² Herr rejected Oppenheimer's dating and preferred to date the controversy between Rabbi Eleazar and Rabbi Yose ben Halafta to the period just before the revolt of Bar Kokhba.⁹³ If we accept the prophecy of Rabbi Jose ben Kisma, this source should not be regarded as a testimony of any kind for the results of the revolt in the Galilee.⁹⁴

Archaeological Finds:

Tomb inscriptions from Scythopolis and Gadara

1. Inscription from Beth Shean (Scythopolis), in which it is said that Publius Aelius Capito died at the age of 35 after ten years of military service. His last position was in Legio XI Claudia.⁹⁵
2. Inscription from Gadara, marking the burial site of a soldier of Legio XIV Gemina.⁹⁶

These inscriptions have served some scholars as evidence for the participation of the Galilee in the revolt and for the battles that occurred in the regions where they were found.⁹⁷ Such conclusions are not sufficiently established, and it would be preferable to reject them. First, the two cities, Beth Shean and Gadara, are not included at all in the area of Galilee.⁹⁸ Second, the presence of Legio XI Claudia in Judaea during the revolt is certain, but not that of Legio XIV Gemina; since the question of its participation in the revolt is doubtful, and does not support the discussed issue.⁹⁹ The attempt to link the

92 Idem, "Jewish Community in Galilee," 61–62.

93 Herr, "Participation of Galilee," 71–72.

94 Schäfer, 110–111; Oppenheimer, "Galilee," 232. In the list of sources about the participation of Galilee in the revolt, he included Tosefta, Baba Kamma 8:14, the words of R. Yishmael about the destruction of the House of Abba. Since I rejected the source as evidence for the Second Revolt, I did not include it in my discussion. See above, xxx.

95 Michael Avi-Yonah, "Greek and Latin Inscription from Jerusalem and Beisan," *Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine* 8 (1939), 57–59.

96 *CIL*, III, 12091.

97 See Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 602–603; Gideon Fuks, *Scythopolis, A Greek City in Eretz-Israel* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 1983), 100–103 [in Hebrew].

98 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 23.

99 On the formation of the army, see above 306.

tomb inscription with the source in Lamentations Rabba regarding the three guard posts set up by Hadrian, one of which was Hamat Gader, is not possible¹⁰⁰ because there is no connection between Hamat Gader and Gadara, which is one of the Decapolis cities.¹⁰¹ In addition, there is no proof that the two soldiers died in battles between rebels and the Roman army. It may be that they died natural deaths and thus no historical significance should be given to these inscriptions.¹⁰² Moreover, because of the location of these two cities, especially Beth Shean, it does not seem reasonable that battles took place in their vicinity between the rebels and the Roman army.

Mount Hazon

Among the findings in this place was a tile with an inscription of Legio VI Ferrata.¹⁰³ This legion was one of the two legions that formed the Roman guard forces in Judaea during the revolt,¹⁰⁴ but this single piece of evidence cannot be attributed to extensive activities of the legion, specifically in the Galilee during the Second Revolt. The assumption of Dan Bahat in this regard is preferable; in his opinion, the tile with an inscription of Legio VI Ferrata constituted the first archaeological evidence for the participation of this legion in the suppression of the first revolt in the Galilee, which had already been referred to by Josephus.¹⁰⁵

Hideouts in the Galilee

In 1962 and 1963, two tunnels were discovered in the vicinity of Eilabun in the Beit Netofa Valley. Tfilinski, in his initial report on the first tunnel, said that it is 56 m long, about 1 m wide, and 57.1 m high, and it descends on a slope of

100 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 602.

101 For Hamat Gader, Emmatha and Gadara, see *Tabula Imperii Romani, Iudaea Palestina*, 138–139, entry: Ḥammath, Ḥammé Tiveria, Ammathous.

102 Schäfer, 128. Fuks (above, note 97), 76, note 76, argues that his death at a young age proves that he was killed in military action. However, this is not convincing because (for example, on a tombstone inscription of a soldier from Brigatio who died at the age of 34) there is no reason to suspect that he did not die a natural death. See Alexander Scheiber, “The Early Connections between the Land of the Ger and the Land of Israel,” *The Bar Kokhba Revolt*, 111 [= Shmuel Ettinger, et al. eds. *Festschrift for Yitzhak Baer on his Seventieth Birthday* (Jerusalem: Israeli Historical Society, 1961): 99–111 [in Hebrew].

103 Dan Bahat, “A Roof Tile of the Legio VI Ferrata and Pottery Vessels from Horvat Hazon,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 24 (1974): 169–170. See also idem, “Mt. Hazon—Hideout Complex,” *Nikrot Zurim* 7 (1983): 29–52 [in Hebrew].

104 See above, 44–50.

105 Dan Bahat, “Mount Hazon,” *Hadashot Arkheologiyot* 30 (1969): 11 [in Hebrew].

45 degrees into the depths of the mountain in an east-southeast direction. The tunnel connects with another one that is apparently the main tunnel, and the sloping tunnel served it as an aeration system. The few items found in the tunnel belong to the second to third centuries CE, but at this stage it is not clear what was the function of this tunnel. The second tunnel was exposed at a distance of 800 m west of the first tunnel. Tfilinski identified it as a chimney that served, like the first one, to aerate a single tunnel complex.¹⁰⁶ In spite of the scanty information on the tunnels, Gichon included them in a system of hideouts of the Bar Kokhba period.¹⁰⁷ Tepper and Shahar, in their summary articles on the subterranean hiding places in the Galilee, added the underground hideout in Eilabun to the long list of hiding complexes that constitute, in their view, evidence for the period of preparation for the projected revolt by the Jewish settlements in their main center in the Galilee, like the hideouts located in the Judean plain that had been prepared under the same national leadership.¹⁰⁸ This conclusion, if correct, about the hideout complexes in the Galilee, not only offers no assistance to our main concern, but even increases our wonder as to why, after all the preparations, the population in the Galilee did not take part in the Second Revolt.¹⁰⁹

106 Netanel Tfilinski, *Hadashot Arkheologiyot* 5 (1963): 14; 7 (1963), 19 [in Hebrew].

107 Mordechai Gichon, "Military Aspects of the Bar-Kokhba Revolt and the Subterranean Hideaways," *Cathedra* 26 (1982): 35 [in Hebrew].

108 Yigal Tepper, Yuval Shahar, "The Underground Hideouts in Galilee," Kloner, Tepper, 279–326 [in Hebrew]. On page 319, there is a map of the settlements of the hiding complexes. See also Yuval Shahar, "The Geographical Distribution of Hiding Complexes Sites in the Galilee," *New Studies on the Bar Kokhba Revolt*, 90–92. Idem, "The Underground Hideouts in Galilee and their Historical Meaning," *Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered*, 217–240. On pages 232–235, there is a table of the hideouts in Galilee.

109 See Mordechai Aviam, "The Contribution of Secret Tunnels in the Galilee to the Research on Secret Tunnels," *Nikrot Zurim* 7 (1983): 53–59 [in Hebrew]; The emphasis in the work of Tepper, Sahar, and Aviam is on the comparison between the findings in Galilee and Jezreel Valley with the hideouts in the Judean Shefela. See Amos Kloner, "Judean Subterranean Hideaways from the Time of Bar Kokhba," *Cathedra* 26 (1982): 15–19 [in Hebrew]; Amos Kloner, Boaz Zissu, "Hiding Complexes in Judaea: An Archaeological and Geographical Update on the Area of the Bar Kokhba Revolt," *Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered*, 181–216. See, on page 216, fig. 13, the distribution map of hiding complexes in Judaea. See also Gichon (above, note 107), 42. Therefore, whoever dates these hideouts to the Second Revolt, will argue also for the connection of the findings in Galilee to this function and will link them with the hideouts in the Judean Shefela. Some date it to the Hellenistic period; see Yehuda Dagan, *Shefelat Yehuda: A Collection of Articles* (Tel Aviv: Dept. of Yediat Haaretz, 1982), 32–33 [in Hebrew]. Others dated the tunneling of the subterranean hideouts to the first century CE, the time of the beginning of the anti-Roman resistance movements.

Yinon Shvitziel, a researcher of caves and underground cavities in the Galilee, recently published a list of 35 sites in the Galilee in which were found 65 hideout complexes and hundreds of refuge caves that had been in use from the beginning of the Roman period until after the suppression of the Great Revolt.¹¹⁰ Although some of the hideout complexes in the Galilee were quarried before the Great Revolt, he notes in agreement with Yuval Shahar that the population in the Galilee, like the population in Judah, may have prepared some of these complexes for the Bar Kokhba revolt. But the attempt to create a common background between the hideouts in Judah and the Galilee is not acceptable to me. They claim that the Judean Jews, who were saved after they concealed themselves in hideout complexes in the Judean plain at the end of the Second Revolt, had fled from Judah to the Galilee, carrying with them the knowledge that had helped them to survive in Judah, turning burial caves and underground areas used for storage into hideout complexes.¹¹¹ This assumption is impossible. If the refugees from Judah arrived in the Galilee after the suppression of the revolt, what purpose was there in setting up hideout complexes?

Shvitziel detaches the Galilean hideout complexes from any specific event and prefers to see them as an indication of the general fear of the Roman authorities in various periods. In his opinion, "It seems that the Jewish settlements in the Galilee prepared subterranean cavities as places of refuge and concealment whenever they felt real physical threats against their lives by the

According to them, the hideouts were in use throughout the period, including during the Great Revolt and the Bar Kokhba revolt. See Oppenheimer, "Hideouts," 29; Yadin, "Remarks," 43–44. For this reason, the attempt to ascribe the Galilean and the Jezreel Valley hideouts to the Second Revolt is disputed. A much more reasonable explanation is that the different hideouts were mainly used by the noncombatant population during times of war and the whole population during hard times. See Aviam, *ibid.*, 58; See also the criticism of Gideon Foerster, "Do the Subterranean Hideaways Date from the Period of Bar Kokhba," *Cathedra* 28 (1983): 155–157 [in Hebrew]; and Abraham Negev, "The Hideout Complexes—Is that so?," *Nikrot Zurim* 11–12 (1985): 21–32 [in Hebrew].

110 Yinon Shvitziel, *Cliff Settlements, Shelters and Refuge Caves in the Galilee in the Early Roman Period Based on the Research of Underground Spaces*, diss. Bar Ilan University, Ramat Gan 2010 [in Hebrew]. For a summary of the dissertation, see *idem*, "The Hideout Complexes in Galilee, Their Uniqueness and Distribution—Updates and Reconsideration," *Cathedra* 142 (2012): 7–26 [in Hebrew].

111 Yinon Shvitziel, "Cliff Settlements, Shelters and Refuge Caves in the Galilee," in *In the Hill-Country and in the Shephela and in the Arabah (Joshua 12, 8): Studies and Research Presented to Adam Zertal in the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Manasseh Hill Country Survey*, ed. Shay Bar (Jerusalem: Ariel, 2008), 223–235. *Idem*, "Cliff Refuge Caves in the Galilee and their Typological Identity and Historical Affinity," *The Mountain Mount Ephraim and Benjamin Research*, Beth El, 2011, 45–58 [in Hebrew].



FIGURE 2.1 *Cliff Shelter Caves in Arbel.*
PHOTO BY YINON SHIVTIEL.

Roman authorities, and this phenomenon repeated itself frequently during the early Roman period in Palestine.”¹¹² In view of these words, one should not regard the findings of such complexes in the Galilee as testimony for its participation in the Second Revolt.¹¹³

Coins

A bronze coin of Year Two of the Great Revolt was found during the excavations in Sepphoris,¹¹⁴ yet Avi-Yonah dated it to the period of the Bar Kokhba revolt.¹¹⁵

¹¹² See Shvitiel (above, note 110, the *Cathedra* article), 25–26.

¹¹³ Pinhas Dikstein, “The Military and the International Aspects of the Bar Kokhba Revolt, Part II: The Hideout Caves and the Military Process,” *Haumah* 124 (1996): 16 [in Hebrew]. He rejects the tactical importance of the caves in Bar Kokhba’s military strategy.

¹¹⁴ Leroy Waterman, *Preliminary Report of the University of Michigan Excavations at Sepphoris, Palestine in 1931* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1937), 40 D, 20 See also *BMC*, Palestine, 272, no. 26.

¹¹⁵ See also Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 81, note 208; Michael Avi Yonah, ed. *Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, English ed., (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society and Massada Press, 1978), vol. IV, 1053.

But this dating is erroneous.¹¹⁶ In view of the lack of numismatic finds of the revolt period in the Galilee, there is an obvious attempt here to link this sole coin specifically with the Second Revolt, like the attempt to attribute the Year Two coin of the Great Revolt that was found in Kefar a-Rama to the Bar Kokhba revolt.¹¹⁷ Uzi Leibner lately reported on finds in Khirbet Wadi Ḥamam in the eastern Galilee region, and notes—among other things—a hoard of coins that was found in Area B of the excavation. The hoard contains sixty silver and bronze coins from the beginning of the second century CE. The silver denarii are dated to the third consulate years of Hadrian, 119–138 CE, and a single coin has the engraved emblem of Legio VI Ferrata, which Leibner dated to the years 123–135 CE. Leibner very cautiously linked the destruction layer at the site to the Bar Kokhba revolt or to the unrest among the Galilean Jews after the stationing of the Sixth Legion in the area, apparently during the years 123–127 CE.¹¹⁸ Although the coin hoard is of the Hadrian period, no coins of the Second Revolt were found in it. Also, if the contemporary destruction layer at the site was connected with the stationing of an additional legion in the Galilee area, then there is no direct link to the Bar Kokhba revolt. It is also difficult to imagine that just a small village in the Galilee reacted in opposition to the reinforcement by the Sixth Legion, so as to necessitate the military intervention that caused damage to the village.

Contrary to Leibner's hesitation in his article concerning the participation of the Galilee in the Second Revolt, he notes explicitly in his book that the results of the archaeological survey indicate that Jewish settlements in the Galilee were not damaged during the second century CE, which implies that the Galilee did not take part in the Bar Kokhba revolt.¹¹⁹ From the distribution

116 Dan Barag, "A Note on the Geographical Distribution of Bar Kokhba Coins," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 4 (1980): 30–33; Boaz Zissu, Hanan Eshel, "The Geographical Distribution of Bar Kokhba Coins," *New Studies on the Bar Kokhba Revolt*, 17–40. A Survey of the years 1980–2000.

117 Barag, previous note, 33, note 16. Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 23. See Vassilios Tzaferis, Talia Shay, "Excavations in Kefar a-Rama," *Qadmoniot* 9 (1976): 83–85. The coin is mentioned again in the final publication of the dig: Vassilios Tzaferis, "A Roman Bath at Rama," *Atiqot* (English Series) 14 (1980), 74, and in plate XIV no. 5. However, the photo of this coin is a *prutah* of year two of the Great Revolt (Thanks to Prof. Barag for the information).

118 Uzi Leibner, "Kh. Wadi Hamam: A Village and a Synagogue from the Roman Period in Galilee," *Qadmoniot* 139 (2009): 32, 40 [in Hebrew]. See also idem, "Excavations at Khirbet Wadi Hamam (Lower Galilee): The Synagogue and the Settlement," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 23 (2011): 225–226.

119 Uzi Leibner, *Settlement and History in Hellenistic Roman and Byzantine Galilee: An Archeological Survey of the Eastern Galilee* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 345, 407.

pattern of the coins of the Second Revolt, it appears that they were in use only in the areas under the control of Bar Kokhba.¹²⁰ The fact that so far no large quantities of Second Revolt coins have been found in the Galilee underscores that the above-mentioned attempts do not contribute anything to our discussion. We should not give much importance to random finds of coins,¹²¹ and the absence of coin finds of the Second Revolt period in the Galilee only strengthens the claim that the Galilee did not participate in the Bar Kokhba revolt.



FIGURE 2.2 *Murabba'at II, 43: The Joshua ben Galgola letter.*

From Shimeon Ben Kosibah to Yeshua

- 120 Hanan Eshel, "The Policy of Minting Coins during the Bar Kokhba in Light of the Findings from the Judean Desert," *Judaea and Samaria Research* 5 (1995): 173–182 [in Hebrew].
- 121 An example that proves we cannot relate too much significance to coincidental findings of coins is the third-year Bar Kokhba coin found in the Roman colony Brigatio in the province of Pannonia in current Hungary. See Scheiber (above, note 102), 111–113; Josef Meyshan, "Peregrinations of Bar Cochba Coins," in *Essays in Jewish Numismatic*, (Jerusalem: Israel Numismatic Society 1968): 139–141; See also Hanan Eshel, Boaz Zissu, Gabriel Barkai, "Sixteen Bar Kokhba Coins from Roman Sites in Europe," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 17 (2009–2010): 91–97.

Ben Ga[l]gula and the men of Ha-Baruk (הברך or הכרך)
 Greetin[gs] I swear by the heavens;
 Should harm co[me] [יפט] to any of the Galileans [גללאים]
 Who are with you I'll put your feet
 In fetters as I di[d]
 To Ben Aflul
 [Shimeon ben Kosiba writer]¹²²

Various interpretations have been given to the word “גללאים” in the letter. Some scholars identified the Galalaim as Galileans, and therefore found evidence in this letter that fighters from the Galilee took part in the revolt.¹²³ It may be that even at the beginning of the revolt, some Galilean fighters arrived in the area under the control of Bar Kokhba in order to join his forces.¹²⁴ Others thought that the Galilean fighters joined the Bar Kokhba forces only after the Romans had suppressed the revolt in the Galilee.¹²⁵ And there were some who identified the Galalaim with the Jewish-Christians rather than with the fighters from the Galilee.¹²⁶

Besides the difficulty involved in the identity of the Galalaim, most of the suppositions made by scholars are based on the completion and interpretation

122 DJD 11, no. 43, 159–162; A. Yardeni, Jerusalem 2000, 157–158.

משמעון בן כוסבה לישע
 בן ג(ל)גלה ולאנשי הברך
 שלום מעיד אני עלי ת שמים
 יפט [?] מן הגללאים שהצלכם
 כל אדם שאני נתן ת כבלים
 ברגלכם כמה שעסת(י)
 לבן עפלול
 שמעון בן כוסבה) על (גפשה).

For bibliography on the letter, see *ibid.*, 159, note 1. Schäfer, 118–119.

123 Shmuel Yeivin, “Notes on the Wadi Murabba’at Documents dated to Bar Kokhba Period,” *Atiqot* 1 (1957): 89–93; 93–89; Harold Louis Ginsberg, “Notes on Two Published Letters to Jeshua Galgolah,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 131 (1953): 25.

124 Applebaum, “Second Revolt,” 49.

125 Oppenheimer, “Galilee,” 233; Yeivin (above, note, 123), 93.

126 Józef Tadeusz Milik, “Une lettre de Siméon Bar Kokheba,” *Revue Biblique* 60(1953): 287; J.L. Theicher, “Documents of the Bar Kokhba Period,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 4 (1953): 133–134; Simon Claude Mimouni, “Qui sont les ‘Galiléens’ dans la littérature chrétienne ancienne?,” *Proche-Orient Chrétien* 49 (1999): 53–67.

of the word “יפס”.¹²⁷ If the completion of the word is “יפסד” in the passive voice,¹²⁸ then Bar Kokhba charged Jeshua ben Galgula and his men to protect the Galalaim and warned that he would punish them if they lost (“יפסד”) any one of them. According to this word completion, one cannot identify the Galalaim with the Christians who were persecuted by the rebels and their leader.¹²⁹ On the other hand, those who identify the Galalaim with Galilean fighters claim that the threat of Bar Kokhba against Jeshua ben Galgula derived from the tension between the fighters from Judah and the Galilean fighters created by the “demeaning attitude shown among those coming from different regions to serve in army units.”¹³⁰ Doron Sar-Avi, who adopted the word completion “יפסד”, interpreted the word as *lacking* or *missing*, from the manning of military positions. That is to say, we have another letter from Bar Kokhba warning Jeshua ben Galgula against the desertion of fighters from his stationed forces.¹³¹ The word “כרך” in the second line can be read in different ways. In the first publication of the papyrus, Milik read “הכרך,”¹³² but in the final edition of the papyri collection, Milik changed his reading to “ברך” and thought that the word indicated the place of the camp, which he identified with Kefar Baruch about 5 km east of Hebron.¹³³ Yeivin preferred a different reading for “הכרך” in the general sense of fortress, citadel, or a walled settlement.¹³⁴ Sar-Avi returned to the reading of “הברך” as the name of a place that should be located in the southern part of Judah in the area between Beit Betzi Tekoa and Herodion in view of Letter No. 42, which notes the name of his camp as *Beit Masko* or of Papyrus 115, which mentions that his family was active in Beit Betzi. He identifies “הברך”

127 For a different completion and readings of יפס[?], See Shlomo A. Birnbaum, “Bar Kokhba and Akiba,” *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 86 (1953): 25–27.

128 See Yehzkiel Kutcher, “The Language of the Bar Kokhba’s Hebrew and Aramaic Letters, and the One of His Generation,” *Lesonenu* 26 (1963), 15.

129 Abramsky, 169; Applebaum, “Second Revolt,” 49; Theicher (above, note 126), 134. He completed the word “יפס” as יפסס in the Niphal (reflexive) or Kal (simple) mode of the verb, and identified the “גללאים” as Christians. According to him, Bar Kokhba was scared of Christian propaganda and its impact on the fighters. Therefore, he ordered Yeshua to separate the fighters from the Christians. On the part of the Christians in the revolt, see below, 395–402.

130 Yeivin (above, note 123), 92; Oppenheimer, “Jewish Community in Galilee,” 64–65.

131 Sar-Avi, *Toponyms*, 30–34. He mentions three additional letters: P. Yadin 53, 54, 55 which include orders to return shirkers to the camp.

132 Milik, (above note 126): 258. For the identification of the site, see *Tabula Imperii Romani, Iudaea Palestina*, entry: Caphar Baricha. For some difficulties of Milik’s reading, see Schäfer, 125.

133 Milik, *DD* 11, 160.

134 Yeivin (above, note 123): 90; Ginsberg (above, note 123): 25; Yardeni, 157.

with Khirbet Bureiku located in the area of Kibbutz Migdal Oz.¹³⁵ The location of the camp of Jeshua ben Galgula in southern Judah does not help at all in solving the difficulty of who are the Galalaim. In my opinion, it is preferable to regard them as Jewish refugees who had fled from the Galilee under Roman control.¹³⁶ It is not clear from the letter whether they meant to recruit rebels into the army, and therefore it is difficult to determine whether the Galileans took part in the Second Revolt in the area of Judah¹³⁷ or in the Galilee. And the letter is no proof for the nonexistence of battles in the Galilee.¹³⁸

2.1.2 *Beit She'an Valley and Tel Shalem*

About fifty years ago, Nehemiah Tzori excavated within the area of Tel Shalem and found a building inscription of the vexillatio of Legio VI Ferrata.¹³⁹ The site is situated in the Beth Shean Valley, two kilometers south of Kibbutz Tirat Zvi and about twelve kilometers south of Scythopolis. The site has command over an important crossroads between Scythopolis, Jericho, and Shechem, and over the Scythopolis-Legio-Ptolemais (Acre) road.

Tzori and others linked the inscription to the existence of a Roman camp in that place where a unit of the Second Legion was stationed in Provincia Iudaea. The command headquarters of the Second Legion was located in the Roman camp in Legio (Kefar Othnai), in the region of the Megiddo crossroads of today.¹⁴⁰ This region was a strategic location on the road between Caesarea and Beth Shean, on the southern slopes of the Jezreel Valley. Already by 120 CE,

135 Sar-Avi, *Toponyms*, 30–31.

136 Schürer, *History*, I, 547; Abramsky, 169. According to him: “the גללאים did not actually participate in the Bar Kokhba War. It seems that they are not just direct enemies or simple traitors.” We reject this interpretation since the reason for placing them under such a heavy guard is unclear.

137 Oppenheimer, “Galilee in the Revolt,” 233. For a different interpretation, see Herr, “Galilee,” 73.

138 Applebaum, “Second Revolt,” 49. He supposes that the letter confirms that no battles took place in Galilee.

139 Nehemiah Tzori, “An Inscription of the Legio VI Ferrata from the Northern Jordan Valley,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 21(1971): 53–54. On the inscription: *VEXILLTO/LEG VI/FERR*, see *Hadashot Archeologiot*, 57–58 (April 1976): 17–18; 65–66 (April 1978), 9 (All in Hebrew).

140 Yotam Tepper, “The Roman Legionary Camp at Legio, Israel: Results of an Archaeological Survey and Observations on the Roman Military Presence at the Site,” in *The Late Roman Army in the Near East from Diocletian to the Arab Conquest: Proceedings of a Colloquium Held at Potenza, Acerenza, and Matera, Italy, (May 2005)*, eds. Ariel S. Lewin, Pietrina Pellegrini; with the aid of Zbigniew T. Fiema, Sylvain Janniard; with the aid of Z.T. Fiema, S. Janniard (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2007): 57–71.

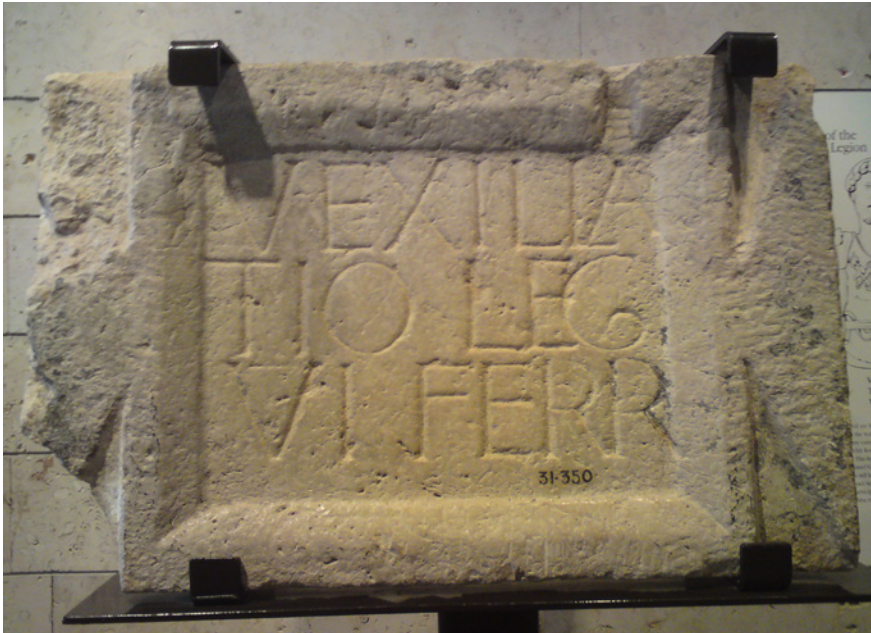


FIGURE 2.3 *Inscription of the vexillatio of Legio VI Ferrata.*

roads had also been laid out from the legion headquarters to the capital of the province, Caesarea,¹⁴¹ as well as to Beth Shean,¹⁴² Sepphoris, and Acre.¹⁴³

- 141 On the roads to Caesarea, see Israel Roll, "Roman Roads to Caesarea Maritima," in *Caesarea Treasures: Summaries and Research on Caesarea and its Vicinity*, vol. 1: *Submitted in honor of Josef Porath*, eds. Etan Ayalon, Avraham Izdarechet (Jerusalem: Association of Friends of Ancient Caesarea, 2011, 239–256; Yotam Tepper, "'19 Miles from . . .': Roman Road from Legio to Caesarea via Ramat Menasche," *Ibid.*, 257 ff. with an extensive bibliography; Idem, "Roman Roads in the 'Airon Pass': Paving Remains from Caesarea to the Sixth Legion Camp in Legio," *New Researches in the Land of Israel* (2004): 47–82; Israel Roll, Eitan Ayalon, "Main Highways in the Sharon in the Roman and Byzantine Archaeological Periods," *Israel-Am ve-Aretz*, 4/22 (1986/87), 156–157; Israel Roll, Eitan Ayalon, "Roman Roads in Western Samaria," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 118 (1986): 113–134; Israel Roll, "Roman Roads to Caesarea Maritima," in *Caesarea Maritima: A Retrospective after Two Millennia*, eds. Avner Raban, Kenneth G. Holum (Leiden: Brill, 1996): 556–557; Israel Roll, "The Roads in Roman-Byzantine Palaestina and Arabia," in *The Madaba Map Centenary, 1897–1997: Traveling through the Byzantine Umayyad Period*. Proceedings of the International Conference held in Amman, 7–9 April 1997, eds. Eugenio Alliata, Michele Piccirillo (Jerusalem: Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, 1999), 109–113, especially note 6.
- 142 Benjamin Isaac, Israel Roll, *Roman Roads in Judaea*, vol. 1: *The Legio-Scythopolis Road* (Oxford: BAR, 1982).
- 143 Meir Hekker, "The Roman Road of Legio-Sepphoris," *Yediot* 25 (1961): 175–186; Benjamin Isaac and Israel Roll, "Judaea in the Early Years of Hadrian's Reign," *Nofim* 13–14 (2004):

In his article on the Second Revolt titled “The Bar Kokhba Revolt: The Roman Point of View,”¹⁴⁴ Eck’s conclusions about the fortitude of the revolt were also based on the archaeological findings from Tel Shalem. According to him, they testify to the participation of the north, the Jordan Valley, and the Galilee in the revolt. In summing up the evidence from Tel Shalem, Eck concluded that “Galilee felt the revolt more than has hitherto been conceded. A decisive battle may have been won here, not far from Caparcotna, the camp of the Second Legion in Judaea.”¹⁴⁵

In a series of additional articles, Eck has persisted in arguing that the revolt was very powerful, and he expanded his hypothesis concerning the points he made earlier.¹⁴⁶ What are the additional findings from Tel Shalem that, in Eck’s opinion, testify to the great importance of this site during the course of the Second Revolt? In 1975, Gideon Foerster reported a discovery near the Tel Shalem region. The finding consisted of parts of a bronze statue and a head that was identified as that of the Roman emperor Hadrian.

Later on, more statue fragments and another head were also found in the area. In view of these finds, Foerster then conducted three short seasons of excavations in the years 1976–1978. In January/February 1977, at a distance of one and a half kilometers northeast of the Roman camp in Tel Shalem, three tombs were found unexpectedly, one of them built of cut stones that were fragments of a huge inscription written in Latin.¹⁴⁷

41–54 [in Hebrew]. Benjamin Isaac, Israel Roll, “Judaea in the Early Years of Hadrian’s Reign,” *Latomus* 38 (1979): 54–66; Benjamin Isaac, Israel Roll, “Legio II Traiana in Judaea,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 33 (1979): 149–156; John Rea, “Legio II Traiana in Judaea,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 38 (1980): 220–221; Benjamin Isaac, Israel Roll, “Legio II Traiana in Judaea: A Reply,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 47 (1982): 131–132 [=198–220].

144 Eck, “Bar Kokhba Revolt,” 76–89.

145 Eck, “Bar Kokhba Revolt,” 88.

146 Eck’s considerations were repeated in different versions in various publications: Eck, “Bar Kokhba Revolt,” 76–89; idem, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ) for 28 XII 2001, 45; idem, “Ein Spiegel der Macht. Lateinische Inschriften römischer Zeit in Iudaea/Syria Palaestina,” *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palestina-Vereins* 117 (2001): 46–63; idem, “The Language of Power: Latin in the Inscriptions of Iudaea/Syria Palaestina,” in *Semitic Papyrology in Context: A Climate of Creativity, Papers from a New York University Conference Marking the Retirement of Baruch A. Levine*, ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 123–144; idem, “Hadrian, the Bar Kokhba Revolt, and the Epigraphic Transmission,” *Bar Kokhba Reconsidered*, 153–170; idem, *Rom Herausfordern*: 49–54; idem, “Bar Kochba-Aufstand der Jahre 132–136,” 249–265.

147 Gideon Foerster, Benjamin Arubas, Dudi Mevorach, “The Bronze Statue of the Emperor, the Hadrian Arch, and the Legion Camp. Returning to Tel Shalem” [in Hebrew]. See the following site: http://www.antiquities.org.il/article_heb.aspx?sec_id=17&sub_subj_id=493&id=1364.



FIGURE 2.4 *Hadrian's Bronze Statue from Tel Shalem.*

PHOTO BY OR FIALKOV.

Foerster participated in a panel, which was published in July 1977 and was titled “The Galilee on the Eve of the Bar Kokhba Revolt: Archaeological Evidence.” He noted there that “the place in which the statue and the inscription on it were found is surprising in itself, since it was not known as a site of any significance. According to a probable reconstruction, the inscription was written in honor of the victory over Bar Kokhba. But, as said before, this is still merely a supposition.”¹⁴⁸

In the two articles published in 1999,¹⁴⁹ Eck dealt extensively with the reconstruction and deciphering of the monumental inscription, inscribed in three lines on an arch that was 11 meters wide. The letters of the inscription were gigantic in height: 41 cm in the first line, 24 cm in the second, and 18–19 cm in

148 Gideon Foerster, “Galilee on the Eve of the Bar-Kokhba Revolt—The Archeological Evidence,” *Cathedra* 4 (1977): 80 [in Hebrew].

149 Eck “Bar Kokhba Revolt,” 87–88; Werner Eck, Gideon Foerster, “Ein Triumphbogen für Hadrian im Tal von Beth Shean bei Tel Shalem,” *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 12 (1999): 294–313.

the third. From the inscription and the fact that it was a dedication to Hadrian written in Latin, Eck inferred that it was part of a colossal arch. Although only a quarter of the letters in the inscription were found in the area, Eck managed to reconstruct it on the basis of the accepted formula for inscriptions of this kind:

IMP CAES · DIVI · TRAIANI · PAR
THICIF · DIVI · NERVAE · NEP · TRAIANO · HADRIANO · AUG
PONTIFMAX · TRIB · POT · XX · IMP · II · COS · III · P · P · S · P · Q · R.¹⁵⁰

Line 1: The Caesar and Emperor, son of the divine Trajan

Line 2: Conqueror of the Parthians, the nephew of the divine Nerva.
Traianus Hadrianus Augustus

Line 3: Pontifex Maximus, twenty times with tribune authority, emperor
for the second time, consul for the third time, father of the homeland, the
Senate, and the people of Rome (the dedicators of the arch).

The reconstruction and completions by Eck of the titles of Hadrian, mainly in the third line of the inscription, have direct implications for the inscription's dating. Since Hadrian had the authority of a **tribune** for the **twentieth** time, he was **consul** for the **third** time, and especially **imperator** for the **second** time (*Imperator iterum*, second acclamation as Imperator), all these numbers indicate that the year 136 CE is the definite date for the engraving of the inscription found in the Tel Shalem camp. That is to say, the date tells us that the arch with the inscription engraved on it was erected after the suppression of the Bar Kokhba revolt. The arch was therefore a Roman triumphal arch raised for the victory over the Bar Kokhba rebels, and the initiative for its erection was that of the Roman government that intentionally raised it in the war zone.

The date, however, raises a number of important questions that Eck himself had asked. First, why was the arch with the inscription to honor Hadrian erected in such a peripheral location? Second, who was the person that instigated the erection of the arch and dedicated it to the emperor?

Bowersock filled in the missing letters of the third line in the inscription in a different manner. In his view, there are only two chronological indications in the inscription. The first was that Hadrian had been given the authority of a **tribune** for the **fourteenth** time, and the second was having been a **consul** for the **third** time. These two dates point to the year 130 CE, the time of Hadrian's

150 Line 1: Imp(eratori) Cae[s(ari) divi T]ra[iani Par-] Line 2: th[i]ci f[ilio] d[ivi Nervae nep(oti) Tr]aiano [Hadriano Aug(usto)] Line 3: pon[t]if(i) m[ax(imo)], trib(unicia pot(estate) xx?, imp(eratori)I]l, co(n)s(uli) [III, p(atri) p(atriciae) S(enatus) P(opulus q(ue) R(omanus)?].



FIGURE 2.5 *The Inscription from Tel Shalem.*

PHOTO BY OR FIALKOV.

visit in the region, which means that the arch and the dedication inscription may have been related to the occasion of Hadrian's tour of the region.¹⁵¹ This conclusion about the date contradicts Eck's determination that the dating of the inscription should not be earlier than 136 CE. According to Bowersock, Eck was aiming for a later date, and therefore rejected the possibility that the arch was erected by the legion with the argument that there was not enough space for inscribing its name, a claim that did not convince Bowersock.¹⁵²

On the question regarding who dedicated the inscription, Eck gave prominence to the fact that it was engraved in Latin, whereas this was a region in which the lingua franca of the provincial population was Greek. In Eck's view, the use of Latin negates the possibility that those who wrote the inscription were from the neighboring city of Beth Shean. The gigantic lettering and the Latin language indicated two things to Eck: (a) that whoever dedicated the arch was a Latin speaker who had the authority to erect an arch and dedicate it to the emperor and (b) that the area in which the arch was raised had to have been the site of an event of extraordinary achievement. Therefore, the name or

¹⁵¹ Bowersock, "Tel Shalem Arch," 172.

¹⁵² Bowersock, "Tel Shalem Arch," 175.

title of the dedicator must have closed the inscription and appeared at the end of the third line. Eck noted two authorities who could have met his criteria for the dedicator. The first is the governor of Provincia Judaea. The second is one of the legions permanently stationed in Provincia Judaea: Legio x Fretensis or Legio vi Ferrata. However, he rejected both proposals for the same reason: the lack of space in the third line of the inscription for the names of the governor and his titles or for the name of the legion.¹⁵³

According to Bowersock, if we limit ourselves to the two titles of Hadrian, a tribune fourteen times and a consul for the third time, then there are enough gaps in the third line to allow the addition to the inscription of the name of the legion that erected the arch, LEG X FRET.¹⁵⁴

Eck raised another argument (in addition to the lack of space available for the appearance of the dedicator's name) to repudiate the possibility that the dedicator of the inscription was one of the two legions stationed in Judaea. In the history of the Roman legions, there is only one example in which a legion honored an emperor: when the Legio III Cyrenaica, which had participated in Trajan's wars against Parthia, dedicated an arch in honor of Trajan's victory over the Parthians. It was erected a mile away from the walls of Dura Europos before Trajan received the additional title of *Parthicus*, and therefore should be dated before the year 116 CE.¹⁵⁵ Because this is the sole example of a legion honoring an emperor, Eck rejected the possibility that the name of one of the legions, the Tenth Fretensis or the Sixth Ferrata, could have appeared in the third line of the Tel Shalem inscription. This argument is totally unacceptable, and I ask (not even with a hint of cynicism), whether the soldiers of Legio III Cyrenaica, who had indeed dedicated an arch to Trajan, were at all interested in creating a precedent or if they even discussed the question of whether an arch could be erected because in the history of the legions, it had not been done before? Or perhaps, for that reason, they were absolutely forbidden to erect an arch.

153 Eck, "Hadrian, the Bar Kokhba Revolt," 159–162. (= idem, *Judäa—Syria Palästina*, 212–228).

154 Bowersock, "Tel Shalem Arch," 175; Aharon Abramovich, *Building and Construction Activities of the Legions in Roman Palestine 1st–4th Centuries CE*, Diss. University of Haifa, Dept. of Archaeology (Haifa, 2011), 94–102; 239–241 [in Hebrew].

155 S. Gould, "Inscriptions. I. The Triumphal Arch," in *The Excavations at Dura-Europos*, conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1933), vol. IV, 56–65; Idem, Supplementary Inscriptions. I. An Addition to the Inscriptions of the Arch of Trajan, in *The Excavations at Dura-Europos*, conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters, vol. VI, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1936), 480–482. See also *Journal of Roman Studies* 72 (1982): 198; *Année Épigraphique* 1982, 249, no. 904.

In 2005 Tibor Grüll reported a possible additional example of a legion honoring an Emperor: the monumental inscription found in Jerusalem at the Haram al-Sharif.¹⁵⁶ His restoration, completion, and interpretation of the inscription pointed to a victory arch built at the initiation of Lucius Flavius Silva, the governor of Judaea, the commander of Legion X Fretensis, and the conqueror of Masada. At the end of the Great Revolt in 70 CE, Legion X Fretensis built an arch, engraved with an inscription honoring the emperors Vespasian and Titus for their victory in Judaea.¹⁵⁷ However, following Cotton's and Eck's criticisms of Tibor Grüll's conclusions, I have to reject the inscription as possible evidence of a legion erecting an arch to honor the emperor. Cotton and Eck dated the building inscription to an arch that they claim was erected to honor the reigning emperor after the foundation of the Colony Aelia Capitolina (131 CE).¹⁵⁸

After Eck rejected the possibility of a legion as the builder of an honorary arch, he raised a third possibility which completes the inscription in a manner that leads in an entirely different direction from his first hypotheses. In his opinion, there was enough space in the third line only for the letters *SPQR*, an abbreviation for *Senatus Populus que Romanus*, which means that the arch was built by the decision and agreement of the people of Rome and according to the decree of the Senate. There is indeed some evidence that the Senate and the people of Rome were the ones who gave their consent to erect large monuments for special achievements, mainly after significant military victories.¹⁵⁹

156 Tibor Grüll, "Fragment of a Monumental Roman Inscription at the Islamic Museum of the Haram as-Sharif (Temple Mount), Jerusalem," *American Schools of Oriental Research Newsletter* 55 (2005): 16–17; idem, "A Fragment of a Monumental Roman Inscription at the Islamic Museum of the Haram ash-Sharif, Jerusalem," *Israel Exploration Journal* 56 (2006): 183–200.

157 Grüll, *ibid.*, 183–200; See also Abramovich, (above, note 153), 159–163; 98 note 368, argued that Eck, in his article of 2003, was not aware of this inscription.

158 Werner Eck, "Ehret den Kaiser. Bögen und Tore als Ehrenmonumente in der Provinz Judaea," in *The Words of a Wise Man's Mouth Are Gracious (Qoh 10, 12). Festschrift for G. Stemmerger on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday*, ed. Mauro Perani (Berlin De Gruyter, 2005): 160–165; Hanah M. Cotton, Werner Eck, "An Imperial Arch in the Colonia Aelia Capitolina: A Fragment of a Latin Inscription in the Islamic Museum of the Haram as-Sharif," in *Israel's Land. Papers Presented to Israel Shatzman on his Jubilee*, eds. Joseph Geiger et al. (Jerusalem: Open University, 2009): 97*–118*; Werner Eck, "Lucius Flavius Silva, Bürger von Urbs Salvia und Eroberer von Masada (Zu *Picus* 26, 2006, 45 ff.)," *Picus* 31 (2011): 45–53 [= idem, *Judäa—Syria Palästina*. 66–73. Werner Eck, Hannah. M Cotton, *CIIP*, vol. 1. *Jerusalem*, part 2: 720, 20–22.

159 Eck, "Hadrian, the Bar Kokhba Revolt," 143 cites examples, all of which are dated early— from the days of Augustus and Tiberius, and the last example is dated to the year 43 CE,

All the examples that Eck noted were from much earlier periods. The last decision of the Senate to erect a triumphal arch was made to commemorate the military achievements of Claudius in Britain in 49 CE. The arch for Claudius was erected on the shores of Gesoriacum, from where the emperor set out on his expedition to conquer Britain.¹⁶⁰ The ninety years that passed since the Senate had used its authority to erect and dedicate a triumphal arch for military achievements raise the following question: Were there no worthy military achievements to be commemorated during this period of time? If I return to the example mentioned about Dura Europos, were Trajan's military achievements not worthy of having an arch dedicated to him by the Senate?

Concerning our case, in Eck's opinion it is the SPQR who dedicated the arch to honor Hadrian in Tel Shalem for his victory in the Bar Kokhba revolt, a revolt that in Eck's view had spread into Arabia and even into Syria. The victory restored Roman self-confidence, and the monumental structure testifies to the renewed power of Rome, which is why the Latin language was used. In Eck's words, "All this makes it quite certain that the arch was built in the context of the Bar Kokhba revolt, and had nothing to do with Hadrian's first visit to the region."¹⁶¹ What, according to Eck, does *all this* include?

1. Cities can erect arches in honor of the visit of the emperor, but the use of Latin eliminates Scythopolis.
2. There are no examples in which legions or the SPQR have even set up arches for an imperial visit to a province.
3. It is not possible to interpret a broken up and disjointed inscription without having examples or parallels from other provinces.¹⁶²

Eck connected the great military achievement to the description of Hadrian as "imperator for the **second** time" (**IMP II**), and therefore he adds it to the third line of the inscription. He found a complete correlation between the end of the Second Revolt, the declaration of Hadrian as imperator for the second time, and the erection of the arch in Tel Shalem. He ends his discussion on this matter by questioning why the arch was erected at Tel Shalem. Since this

in the days of Claudius. This indicates that nearly a hundred years had passed since the SPQR made use of its authority.

160 Anthony A. Barrett, "Claudius British Victory Arch," *Britannia* 22 (1991): 1–19. Josiah Osgood, *Claudius Caesar, Image and Power in the Early Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), Ch. 4: Subduing the Ocean, 94 ff.

161 Eck, "Hadrian, the Bar Kokhba Revolt," 158.

162 Idem, previous note, 158–159.

site has no value in and of itself, the location could not have been chosen at random. Therefore, the only reason for its choice as the site for a war memorial was that this location was part of a battlefield in the Second Revolt. According to Eck, participants in the Senate session at which the subject of the arch at Tel Shalem was discussed were senior army officers who had taken part in suppressing the revolt and persons of military authority to explain to the Senate why Tel Shalem deserved this honor. "Tel Shalem was the right choice. Tel Shalem was not chosen arbitrarily."¹⁶³ And at the end of his discussion of the inscription, Eck summed up by saying, "the arch bears witness to the intensity of the revolt and its impact on Rome; and conversely to the enormous relief, deeply felt when it was over."¹⁶⁴

With much cynicism, Bowersock made a correlation between the inscription in Tel Shalem and the inscription in Petra. Some of Eck's conclusions were derived from the size of the Latin letters in the inscription; but the dimensions of the inscription in Tel Shalem are dwarfed by those of the inscription of which Eck did not know at the time, from the area of the large temple in Petra.¹⁶⁵ Bowersock repeatedly asked who set up this Latin inscription: the Senate and the people of Rome? And in honor of which military victory?¹⁶⁶ He continued asking if the Senate and the people initiated the monumental arch and inscription, how could no evidence of any kind remain in the written sources?

Following his restoration of the inscription, Bowersock dated the arch and the inscription to the year 130 CE. In his view, there is no difficulty with space at the end of the third line of the inscription, and therefore the name of the legion—either the Tenth Fretensis or the Sixth Ferrata—can be entered at the end of the line. Eck had done this himself when he discussed the various possible completions of the inscription. In his reconstruction of the third line, Bowersock preferred the name of the Legion Tenth Fretensis.¹⁶⁷ I would rather add the name of the Legion Sixth Ferrata, which was the second legion stationed in Provincia Judaea since the year 123 CE. The camp of this second

163 Eck, previous note, 162, and note 34, in which he refers to note 18; however, the reference is to an article by Peter Schäfer that deals with the Second Revolt and the Rabbis!

164 Eck, previous note, 162.

165 S. Tracy, "An Imperial Inscription from Petra," in *Petra Great Temple*, vol. 1. Brown University Excavations 1993–1997, ed. Martha Joukowsky (Providence: M. Joukowsky, 1998): 370–375; idem, "The dedicatory inscription to Trajan at the 'metropolis' of Petra," in *The Roman and Byzantine Near East*, vol. 11: *Some Recent Archaeological Research*, ed. John H. Humphrey (Portsmouth, R.I. 1999): 51–58.

166 Bowersock, "Tel Shalem Arch," 177.

167 Bowersock, "Tel Shalem Arch," 175.

legion was in Legio (Kefar Othnai).¹⁶⁸ From the evidence I mentioned above, the camp in Tel Shalem apparently served as a camp for a vexillatio of this legion.¹⁶⁹

In my opinion, the arch and inscription in honor of Hadrian are connected with the visit of the emperor to the region in 130 CE. Kenneth Holum and Layton Lehmann reconstructed Hadrian's itinerary in the area.¹⁷⁰ Eck criticized and rejected the reconstruction of Lehmann and Holum because they claimed that Hadrian had visited Caesarea, even though they had no direct evidence of this visit.¹⁷¹ However, do not the inscriptions on the aqueduct at Caesarea hint at its building and restoration during Hadrian's visit to the city?

Recently, Cotton and Eck together—and each of them separately—published inscriptions from Caesarea; in one of them, the name *Tineius Rufus*, the governor of Judaea in the years 130–133, was mentioned for the first time apart from its reference in rabbinical literature: “To Emperor Caesar Traianus Hadrianus Augustus, son of the divine Traianus Partichus grandson of the divine Nerva, Pontifex Maximus, with tribunician power for the fourteenth (?) time, consul for the third time, father of his country, the beneficiarii of Tineius Rufus, imperial legate with praetorian rank, (have erected a statue?)”¹⁷²

168 Yotam Tepper, “The Roman legionary camp at Legio, Israel: Results of an Archaeological Survey and Observations on the Roman Military Presence at the Site,” in *The Late Roman Army in the Near East from Diocletian to the Arab Conquest*; Proceedings of a Colloquium Held at Potenza, Acerenza, and Matera, Italy, (May 2005), eds. Ariel S. Lewin, Pietrina Pellegrini; with the aid of Zbigniew T. Fiema, Sylvian Janniard (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2007): 57–71.

169 See above 49.

170 Kenneth Holum, “Hadrian and Caesarea: An Episode in the Romanization of Palestine,” *Ancient World* 23 (1992): 51–61; Lehmann-Holum, 12f. See also Anthony R. Birley, “Hadrian's Travels,” in *The Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power*, Proceedings of the Third Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire (Roman Empire c. 200 BC–AD 476), Rome, March 20–23, 2002, eds. Lukas de Blois et al. (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 2003), 425–441.

171 Eck, “Hadrian, the Bar Kokhba Revolt,” 155 and note 12. See Helmut Halfmann, *Itinera Principum*. Geschichte und Typologie der Kaiserreisen im Römischen Reich (Stuttgart: F. Steiner Verlag, 1986), 207. He omitted the name *Caesarea* from Hadrian's tour.

172 Hannah M. Cotton, Werner Eck, “Governors and their Personnel on Latin Inscriptions from Caesarea Maritima,” *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities*, VII, 7 (Jerusalem: The Academy, 2001): 215–38; idem, “Governors and their Personnel on Latin Inscriptions from Caesarea Maritima,” *Cathedra* 122 (2006): 31–52 [in Hebrew]. Werner Eck, “Latin Dedication to Hadrian by the Beneficarii of the Governor Tineius Rufus,” *CIIP* Vol. II No. 1276. See also *AE*, 2003, no. 107. The Latin inscription: [Imp(eratori) Caes(ari) divi Traiani Parthici f(ilio) divi Nervae nep(oti) Traiano Hadriano]] Aug(usto)]

The Caesarea inscription is a dedicatory inscription to Hadrian, dedicated by the Beneficarii of Tineius Rufus. The inscription in Latin was one meter long, with the life-sized statue of Hadrian placed above it. The inscription should be connected with the headless statue found in Caesarea.¹⁷³

Cotton and Eck dated the inscription and the placing of the statue to the year 130 CE when the emperor visited the province and its capital. The inscription confirms the estimation made by Kenneth Holum in an article in which he reconstructed the visit of Hadrian to the region and claimed that the emperor also visited Caesarea. In view of this, perhaps it is worthwhile to consider Holum's article—and his reconstruction of the *Adventus* of the Emperor in the region—more seriously. Various sources present Hadrian as the *wandering emperor*, who spent many years during his reign traveling throughout the empire and visiting many cities and provinces.¹⁷⁴ Hadrian visited Judaea in the spring and early summer of 130 CE on his way from Syria to Egypt.¹⁷⁵ After spending the winter in Antioch, he continued on to Palmyra.¹⁷⁶ From Damascus, he entered the region of Provincia Arabia,¹⁷⁷ arriving in Bosra, the capital city where legio III Cyrenaica was encamped. He then followed the Via Nova Traiana down along the Limes through Philadelphia (Amman) to Petra, which changed its name in honor of his visit to *Hadriana Petra*.¹⁷⁸

pont(ifici) ma[x(imo), tr(ibunicia) pot(estate) xiv (?) co(n)s(uli) III p(atri) p(atriciae)] | b(eneficiarii) Tinei Rufi [leg(ati) Aug(usti) pr(o) praet(ore)—|—].

- 173 Michael Avi-Yonah, "The Caesarea Porphyry Statue Found in Caesarea," *Israel Exploration Journal* 20 (1970–71): 203–208. [= For a Hebrew version, see Avi-Yonah, "The Caesarea Porphyry Statue," *Eretz Israel* 10 (1970): 50–52].
- 174 Dio Cassius 69.5.2–3: "and he aided the allied and subject cities most munificently. He had seen many of them—more, in fact, than any other emperor—and he assisted practically all of them, giving to some a water supply, to others harbours, food, public works, money and various honours, differing the different cities."
- 175 See 1. Dio Cassius 69.12.2; 2. *SHA, Hadrian* 14.4–6; 3. Epiphanius of Salamis, *De mensuris et ponderibus* 14 (PG 53, 260–261).
- 176 *CIS* II, no. 3959 = J. Cantineau, *Inventaire des Inscriptions de Palmyre* (Beyrouth: Impr. Catholique, 1930), I, no. 2 = Christiane Dunant, *Le sanctuaire de Baalshmin a Palmyre* Vol. III: Les inscriptions (Rome: Institut suisse de Rome, 1971), no. 44: Haddriane. This bilingual inscription in Palmyrian script is dated to 130/1. [MR]N HDRY[N] 'LH' (Our Lord Hadrian, [the] God).
- 177 Harold Mattingly, Edward Allen Sydenhman, *Roman Imperial Coinage*, vol. 2: Vespasian to Hadrian (London: Spink, 1926), 452, 464: ADVENTVS AVG ARABIAE RESTITVTORI ARABIAE.
- 178 For the coins, see Augusto Spijkerman, *The Coins of the Decapolis and Provincial Arabia* (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1978), 220–235; Glen W. Bowersock, *Roman Arabia* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983), 110–111. See the papyrus documents from Nahal Hever. On the change in the name of Petra, see Lewis, *Documents from the*



FIGURE 2.6 *Headless Statue Found in Caesarea.*

PHOTO BY OR FIALKOV.

Bar Kokhba Period. 108–112. Papyrus 25, dated: 9 July 131, A Countersummons, issued by Babatha, l. 11: Ἀδριανῆ Πέτρας = Hadrianic Petra. And see commentary, Lewis, 112: “The Hadrianic epithet of Petra appears only in this document, which may be an indication that the appellation was a recently bestowed honor, on the occasion of Hadrian’s visit there.” See also 5/6 Hev 25, *Pap. Yadin* 25.

From Petra, he returned along the Via Nova to Gerasa, where the city dedicated a triumphal arch to Hadrian.

The inscription engraved on the arch suggests it should be dated to the year 130 CE. On the same occasion, three statues were set up in the city in honor of the emperor.¹⁷⁹ From there, he continued on through the cities of the Decapolis; near Pella, he probably crossed the river Jordan into the Jordan Valley and Provincia Iudaea. The visit of the emperor was commemorated by coins with the inscription *ADVENTVI AUG IVDAEAE*.¹⁸⁰ Scythopolis was apparently Hadrian's first stop in Provincia Iudaea. In a number of inscriptions, his name is connected with the city, and the date of Hadrian's visit to the region should probably be dated to 130 CE.

2. An inscription from Beth Shean dated to 130, dedicated by the soldiers of the first cohort of the legio x Fretensis. The inscription was probably the base for Hadrian's statue.¹⁸¹



FIGURE 2.7 A Dedicatory Inscription for Hadrian's Visit to Iudaea and Scythopolis, Raised by 1 Coh of the x Fretensis.

- 179 For the inscription of the arch, see Bradford C. Welles, "The Inscriptions," in Carl H. Kraeling, *Gerasa, City of the Decapolis* (New Haven: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1938), no. 58; For the inscriptions on the statues, see nos. 143–145.
- 180 Harold Mattingly, *Coins of Roman Empire in the British Museum*, vol. III, *Nerva to Hadrian* (London: Spink, 1936), vol. III, 493–494, nos. 1655–1661; Mildenberg, *The Coinage of the Bar Kokhba War*, 97–98 argues that the *adventus* coins were struck in the years 130–132 CE.
- 181 The inscription was first published by Charles Clermont-Ganneau, *Études d'Archéologie Orientale* II (Paris: É. Bouillon, 1897), 171, as originating from Scythopolis. In *CIL* III 13589

Imp(eratori) Caes(ari) Traiano
 Hadriano Aug(usto)
 p(atri) p(atriae) Leg(io) x Fret(ensis) Coh(ors) I

Since the title *Pater Patriae* was bestowed on Hadrian in 128, the inscription can be dated to 130, during Hadrian's visit to the region.¹⁸² Can it be assumed that the veteran legion in the province (the x Fretensis) had sent one of its units (the first cohort) to welcome the Emperor and that, to commemorate the visit, they erected a statue with the aforementioned inscription?

3. Cotton and Eck noted two indirect epigraphic testimonies to this event. The city of Scythopolis constructed statues to honor the wife and daughter of Tineius Rufus—and perhaps also to honor the man himself. The statues may have been set up during the visit to the city by the governor and his family, who came to receive the emperor.¹⁸³

4. Leah Di Segni and Benjamin Arubas presented further support of the possible visit to Scythopolis of the emperor in 130 CE. A Greek inscription was found by them in March 2007 in the south gallery of the central court in the Rockefeller Museum. Translation of the inscription:

In imitation of Hadrian, Silvanus the most
 Distinguished and spectabilis count and governor
 Has built his own city

The inscription had originally come from Beth Shean. Silvanus was its governor during the reign of the emperor Arcadius, and the inscription is dated after the year 385 CE. In the opinion of the researchers, the inscription notes that Silvanus built the city in imitation of Hadrian's construction of it. The rebuilding of the city in the fourth or fifth century is linked to the earthquake of 363 CE. Yet, what has this fourth-century inscription to do with the visit of the

the publishers claimed that its origin was Samaria. In *CIL* III 14155.14 it was corrected to the former place of origin. For a picture of the inscription, see Gaalyah Cornfeld, *Daniel to Paul: Jews in Conflict with Graeco-Roman Civilization* (New York: Macmillan, 1962), 347.

182 Eck, "Hadrian, the Bar Kokhba Revolt," 156 and notes 15–16. He claimed that the title cannot serve as an indication of a date, 128, since the provincial population used the title before 128; idem, "Bar Kochba-Aufstand der Jahre 132–136," 262. Here Eck argued that this inscription should be considered a questionable one.

183 Hannah M. Cotton, Werner Eck, "Governors and Their Personnel on Latin Inscriptions from Caesarea Maritima," *Cathedra* 122 (2006): 50 [in Hebrew].

emperor to Scythopolis in 130 CE? Hadrian, more than any emperor, is known as *Founder and Builder*: in the Land of Israel, he founded Aelia Capitolina, and he built the high-level aqueduct in Caesarea as well as in other places where no testimonial inscriptions remain. Could it be that Hadrian's part in building the city was still recalled in the Scythopolis of the fourth century? Is this merely a literary comparison or was it some real and well-established memory of Hadrian's construction in the city? Archaeologists had dated the flourishing of the city from the second century after the Bar Kokhba revolt until the reign of Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius;¹⁸⁴ but more recently, they have pushed the date back to the time of Trajan and Hadrian and linked it with the visit of the emperor in 130 CE.

In an appendix he wrote regarding the inscription under discussion, Arubas asserted that the building of the central monument should be dated to the year 130 CE, during Hadrian's visit to the region, and should be compared with the triumphal arch in Gerasa. Arubas suggested that, in the rivalry between the two cities over their reputation, Scythopolis would not have ceded to Gerasa.¹⁸⁵

Nevertheless, I agree with Eck that the inhabitants of Scythopolis had no connection with the erection of the arch or its inscription in Tel Shalem. But the reason for this is not because of the Greek or Latin language! In my opinion, during the preparations for the visit of the emperor in the region, a unit of Legio VI Ferrata set up the magnificent arch and dedicated it to the visiting Emperor. These soldiers were Latin speakers and therefore they engraved the inscription in their own language. The arch and the inscription were in honor of the emperor who knew Greek and was nicknamed *Graeculus*, but the language of the dedicators of the arch was Latin! Did the emperor actually visit the camp? This is a difficult question with no decisive answer. Whatever the answer may be, the monumental arch and its inscription are an actual fact!

184 Yoram Tsafrir, Gideon Forester, "From Byzantine Scythopolis to Arab Baysan—Changing Urban Concept," *Cathedra* 64 (1992): 7 [in Hebrew]; idem, "Urbanism at Scythopolis—Beth Shean in the Fourth to the Seventh Centuries," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 51 (1997): 89. The urban plan of Beth Shean should be ascribed to the Roman period. The earliest Roman remains known to us, such as the first stage of the basilica or the first foundations of the theatre, are probably from the first century CE. Most of the construction and planning of the city should probably be attributed to the second century CE, most likely during the reigns of Antonius Pius and Marcus Aurelius, when the main period of florescence in the Roman East occurred.

185 Leah Di Segni, Benjamin Y. Arubas, "An Old-New Inscription from Beth Shean," in *Man Near a Roman Arch: Studies Presented to Prof. Yoram Tsafrir*, eds. Lea Di Segni, Yizhar Hirschfeld, Joseph Patrich, Ruth Talgam (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society 2009): 115*–124*.

From Scythopolis or Tel Shalem, the emperor continued on the renovated road between Scythopolis and Legio¹⁸⁶ and visited the legion's camp in Legio/Caparcotna.¹⁸⁷ It is not clear whether he went north to Sepphoris, which had changed its name to Diocaesarea to honor the name of the emperor and the Greek god Zeus whom he highly favored.¹⁸⁸ Or perhaps he continued from Legio to Caesarea, the capital of the province. His visit to Caesarea was mentioned above. Holum suggested linking the visit of 130 CE to Hadrian's promise to the inhabitants of Caesarea during his visit to improve the water supply to the city, which resulted in the construction of Channel B, the High-Level Aqueduct.¹⁸⁹ Evidence of this can be found in the inscriptions on the aqueduct, most of which mention the name of Hadrian; and there is no doubt that it was built in the year 130 CE in honor of his visit to the city.¹⁹⁰

Hadrian then went up to Jerusalem, and during his visit he decided to found Aelia Capitolina.¹⁹¹ From Jerusalem, he returned to the southern coastal plain and visited Gaza, and from there he went to Egypt.¹⁹² Di Segni used the following inscription as evidence of the emperor's visit to Judaea. Though the original location of the marble inscription is difficult to trace, its contents were linked with the visit of Hadrian.¹⁹³ The inscription reads as follows: "To the Olympian gods; for the preservation of the Emperor Caesar Trianus Hadrianus Augustus, father of the motherland, the savior and benefactor, villagers of Caparbanaia."

Di Segni suggested two possible identifications of Kafar Banaya, either Khirbet Baniya (Horvat Binaya) in Western Samaria, to the east of Caesarea,

186 Note that in 129 CE, the road from Scythopolis to the Valley of Jezreel was renovated. See Benjamin Isaac, Israel Roll, "Judaea in the Early Years of Hadrian's Reign," *Latomus* 38 (1979): 57, 61, note 17.

187 Isaac, Roll, previous note, 58–61; Benjamin Isaac, Israel Roll, "Legio II Traiana in Judaea," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 33 (1979): 149–156.

188 Hill, *Catalogue*; See also Isaac, Roll, (above, note 186), 63.

189 Holum, (above, note 170): 51–61.

190 On the inscriptions, see *CIIP*, vol. II, 132–142, nos. 1200–1209.

191 On the founding of Aelia Capitolina, see Judy Magness, "Aelia Capitolina: A review of some current debates about Hadrianic Jerusalem," in *Unearthing Jerusalem: 150 Years of Archaeological Research in the Holy City*, eds. Katharina Galor, Gideon Avni (Winona Lake, IN.: Eisenbrauns, 2011): 313–324.

192 On the visit to Gaza and Egypt, see Birley, above, note 170.

193 Leah Di Segni, "New Toponym in Southern Samaria," *Liber Annuus* 44 (1994): 579–584. *SEG* XLIV, no. 1361; *AE* 1994, no. 1781; For a different identification, see Lea A. Di Segni, "The Hadrianic Inscription from Southern Samaria," *Liber Annuus* 53 (2003): 335–340. Di Segni dealt with the same inscription several times. Her first identification of the village should be ignored. In the second publication, she identified the village as Kefar Banaya.

or Khirbet B'inna (Baenna Ib'anna) in southern Samaria. According to her, in the second century, in a village with mixed population, the dedicators of the inscription called themselves *villagers* and not *the villagers*, which shows their knowledge of the Greek language or that they did not represent the village population.

In a 2003 publication, Eck linked the inscription to Hadrian's visit and concluded, "It reveals that the patterns of interrelations between ruler and subjects familiar from other provinces were not as foreign to this province as is commonly assumed."¹⁹⁴ However, in a recent publication based on Di Segni's second publication of 2003, Eck argued that the inscription is a modern forgery!¹⁹⁵ As for Tel Shalem, if we accept the conclusion that the soldiers of the Roman legion set up the arch and the inscription, all the questions that Eck raised above will disappear! Neither the arch nor the inscription has anything to do with the Second Revolt since they had already been erected in 130 CE, two years before the outbreak of the revolt. Even if new evidence exists that the Second Revolt had a greater impact than we had previously thought, the inscription in Tel Shalem cannot testify to this!¹⁹⁶

After the events of the War of Quietus, the Romans brought a second legion to be permanently stationed in Legio.¹⁹⁷ In the region of the camp, the Romans built a highly developed road system in the region, with roads extending between Legio and Tel Shalem through Scythopolis, from Legio to Diocaesarea and Tiberias, from Legio to Ptolemais (Acre), and from Sepphoris to Tiberias. These roads also served to form a tight enclosure, preventing Jewish rebels from the Galilee and their Judaeian brethren in Judaea from collaborating and joining forces.¹⁹⁸

What is the significance of the arbitrary statement by Eck that a military victory was achieved in the region of Tel Shalem, not far from Kefar Othnai, the camp of the second legion to be stationed in Judaea? Against whom did they fight and whom did they conquer? It is not reasonable to suppose that a battle was held in the Tel Shalem region that could be connected with the

194 Eck 2003: 156. Based on Di Segni, 1994.

195 Werner Eck, "Der Bar Kochba-Aufstand der Jahre 132–136," 262 and note 52. He referred to a further forgery with the same text but on a bronze piece.

196 Bowersock, "Tel Shalem Arch," 171.

197 Werner Eck, Yotam Tepper, "A Dedication to Silvanus near the Camp of the Legio VI Ferrata near Lajjun," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 20 (2001): 85–88.

198 Israel Roll, "The Roman Road System in the Land of Israel." *Qadmoniot* 9 (1976): 38–50 [in Hebrew]; Benjamin Isaac, Israel Roll, "Legio II Traiana in Judaea: A Reply." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 47 (1982): 131–132.

Bar Kokhba revolt. The claim that battles could have been conducted even in regions outside the control of the rebels is generally a correct one. But existing evidence points to the fact that during the course of the Second Revolt, the preparatory stage was already focused in regions that were under rebel control. In fact, the evidence indicates that the rebels acted against the Romans mainly in the areas in which they resided and where they set up self-government, without widening the circle of conflict outside these areas.

2.1.3 *The Jezreel Valley*

Evidence for battles between rebels and the Roman army in the Jezreel Valley is derived from only one source:

BT, Gittin 57a:

It has been taught: R. Eleazar the Great said: 'There are two streams in the valley of Yadaim, one running in one direction and one in another, and the sages estimated that [at that time] they ran with two parts water to one of blood.' In a Baraita it has been taught: For seven years the Gentiles fertilized their vineyards with the blood of Israel without using manure.¹⁹⁹

Although Rabbi Eleazar the Great died before the Second Revolt,²⁰⁰ a few scholars attributed this source to the period after the suppression of the revolt.²⁰¹ Yet, even if we overlook the chronological difficulty, there is no certainty as to the location of the *valley of Yadayim*. Some identified it with the Beit Rimmon Valley mentioned in various traditions.²⁰² But in view of what was said above, even the identification of the Beit Rimmon Valley is in dispute and does not contribute to our discussion.²⁰³ Yeivin solved the chronological difficulty by claiming that the name of the person transmitting the words was mistakenly

199 Trans. Soncino Ed.:

"תניא רבי אליעזר הגדול אומר: שני נחלים יש בבקעת ידים, אחד. מושך אילך ואחד מושך אילך; ושיערו חכמים שני חלקים מים ואחד דם. במתניתא תנא: שבע שנים בצרו אומות העולם את כרמיהן מדמן של ישראל בלא זבל"

200 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 403–404; Schäfer, 179, where he identifies R. Eleazar the Great with R. Eliezer ben Hyrcanus, who did not live until the time of the Second Revolt. For opposition to this identification, see Jacob Neusner, *Eliezer Ben Hyrcanus: The Tradition and the Man* (Leiden: Brill, 1973), I, 3.

201 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 403, note 61.

202 Ibid. See also Büchler, *Schauplätze*, 204, note 3.

203 See above 156–157.

confused, and the reference is to Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus.²⁰⁴ Yeivin also located the valley of Yadayim in the Jezreel Valley, in the area north of Ein-Ganim. This was because of the link he found between the source and the prophecy of Ezekiel on the war of Gog in the land of Magog (Ezekiel 39:1–10). In his opinion, the source describes the suppression of the rebels who fought in the Jezreel Valley.²⁰⁵ The suggestion of Yeivin to resolve the chronological difficulty and his identification of the valley of Yadayim are not convincing and do not testify to the participation of the Jezreel Valley in the Second Revolt.

Contrary to the scholars who attributed this source to the Bar Kokhba revolt, Alon thought that it described the repression of the Diaspora revolt in Egypt, and he identified the valley of Yadayim as the Delta of the Nile.²⁰⁶ Schäfer dated the source back to the period of the Great Revolt. In his view, the attempt to link this source to the Second Revolt was inappropriate because the source derives from parallel traditions in which the word *blood*, common to both, is the only associative link between them. According to him, this source is from the collection of legends associated with the Great Revolt.²⁰⁷

A clear picture emerges from the variety of sources and testimony concerning whether the Second Revolt had spread northward to the area of the Jezreel Valley and the Galilee: these regions did *not* participate in the Bar Kokhba revolt. Non-participation by the Jewish population of these regions in the revolt raises surprise and wonder. Until a few generations ago, it might have been possible to understand their non-participation on the basis of the predominant assumption in the research literature that during the Second Temple period, there was a *Galilee type* that defined *Galilean Jewry*, simple people who had

204 Yeivin, 223, note 108.

205 Ibid., 94, 237, note 65.

206 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 403–405. He found support for this identification in a tenth-century tradition, *Tanna Devei Eliyahu*, ch. (30) 28, 151: “The elder R. Eliezer, quoting a Psalm to Asaph. O God, the heathen have come (Ps. 79:1), said: Hadrian Caesar came and seized Alexandria of Egypt where there were one hundred and twenty myriads of Jews. He misled them by having them advised as follows: Go forth and take your stand in the valley of Yadayim, and this [Egyptian] people will be unable to prevail over you. The Jews did as he advised. Thereupon, at their rear, Hadrian stationed fifty thousand of his men armed with swords who kept killing the Jews until not one of them remained, as is said. They shed their blood like water (Ps. 79:3)—indeed, three rivers of blood, so say the Sages, flowed out the valley of Yadaim and into the Great (Mediterranean) Sea. The Sages tested the waters of the Great Sea and found three parts of it to be blood and only one part water.” Translated by William G. Braude, Israel J. Kapstein, *Tana debe Eliyahu* [The Lore of the School of Elijah], (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1981), 370.

207 Schäfer, 179.

distanced themselves from the Torah and Judaism and had no sense of affiliation with the Temple in Jerusalem, Judah, or the Pharisaic leadership. This assumption found its expression, according to scholars, in the words of Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai: "O Galilee, Galilee, you hate the Torah; your end will be in the hands of the Messikin."²⁰⁸ There is no doubt that such a view was based on the desire of the scholars to explain the reasons for the success of Jesus, particularly in the area of the Galilee where he made many converts to his teachings.²⁰⁹ But it has recently been confuted by researchers who rejected the definition of *Galilean Jewry* as differing from its Judaic sister. Oppenheimer summed up those researchers' main points: "Life in the Galilee was marked by Pharisaic doctrines exactly as it was in Judah. It has been clarified that the population of the Galilee were no different from the Judaeans with respect to their Jewish character both during the Second Temple period and during the Yavneh period, and therefore there was no special Galilean type or any different pattern of life."²¹⁰

Yuval Shahar, who argued for the existence of hideout complexes in the Galilee that had been quarried in preparation for the Second Revolt, added that these complexes were an additional proof of the shared ethos and national agenda of the Galilean Jews with their Judaeans brethren.²¹¹

If we accept Oppenheimer's interpretation, then the wonder I expressed above is even further intensified. According to him, the Jews of the Galilee were closely affiliated with the Temple in Jerusalem, went there on pilgrimages, fulfilled the commandments relating to it, made their tithe payments, and were strictly observant of the purity laws.²¹² After the destruction of the Temple, during the period of the Yavneh generation, the Galileans accepted the authority of the leadership institutions, and sources testify to the mutual ties between the Galilee and Yavneh.²¹³ It is therefore surprising that the population in the Galilee did not actively participate in the Second Revolt. Where was this uniform Judaism, as Oppenheimer portrays it? Were the connection

208 See *TJ*, Shabbat, 16: 15d: "...גליל גליל שנאת התורה סופך לעשות במסיקין". See also Oppenheimer, "Jewish Community in Galilee" 55, note 11.

209 Oppenheimer, "Jewish Community in Galilee," 53, notes 1–2, with bibliography. For a review article, see Günter Stemberger, "Galilee Land of Salvation," in *The Gospel and the Land*, ed. William D. Davies (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974): 409–438.

210 Oppenheimer, "Jewish Community in Galilee," note 3, with bibliography. See also Sean Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander to Hadrian: A Study of Second Temple Judaism* (Wilmington Del.: M. Glazier, 1980), ch. 9 on Christianity in Galilee, 344–391.

211 See Shahar (above, note 108), [in Hebrew], 92–93; in English, 229–231.

212 Oppenheimer, "Jewish Community in Galilee," 54, 58.

213 Oppenheimer, "Jewish Community in Galilee," 63.

and affiliation of the Galilean population with Jerusalem not in effect in the case of the Second Revolt? Or should we distinguish between the Jewish population in the Galilee and the population in Judah, at least in connection with their affiliation to Jerusalem and the Temple?

Perhaps we should adopt the assumptions of Freyne, who thought that the loyalty of the Galilean population to the Temple was because of practical considerations: "The sources of their confidence in the ongoing struggle for the necessities of life and this 'attenuated' understanding of the temple and its symbolism may have been the ultimate reason for their continued faithfulness to the Yahweh shrine through the centuries despite the vicissitudes of history."²¹⁴ But such practical considerations no longer existed after 70 CE at least. Freyne also thought that, because of the tenuous nature of their loyalty to and affiliation with the Temple and Jerusalem, Galileans were not prepared to endanger their existence for the sake of the political and religious center in Jerusalem and in Judah.²¹⁵ This interpretation may perhaps explain the reason for the nonparticipation of the Galileans in the revolt.

But I reject Freyne's approach, preferring the assumptions of Oppenheimer about a united Judaism. However, Oppenheimer's explanations for the reasons behind the non-participation of the Galileans in the revolt do not seem plausible. According to him, the primary motive for this non-participation was that the cause for the revolt was directly concerned with Jerusalem and its purpose was the liberation of Jerusalem. Yet this argument contradicts other statements he made. How can we reconcile Oppenheimer's description of the unity between Galilean and Judaic Judaism with his claim that the Galileans did not join the revolt because the reason for it was solely Jerusalem?

The second reason Oppenheimer offered for the non-participation of the Galileans is the relative distance between the Galilee and Jerusalem.²¹⁶ This argument is also unconvincing because Oppenheimer describes in detail the ties that were created between the Galilee and Judah, for example, the tours of the sages among the settlements in the Galilee or the visits by the residents of settlements in the Galilee to Yavneh.²¹⁷ Why, just at a time of crisis—and during a period in which the road network in Palestine had reached its height of development (as discussed below)—would this distance between the Galilee and Jerusalem in Judah have turned into a barrier? Moreover, Oppenheimer transferred the area of revolt from the Galilee to Judah; that is to say, he did not

²¹⁴ Freyne (above, note 210): 295.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 246.

²¹⁶ Oppenheimer, "Revolt," 64.

²¹⁷ Oppenheimer, "Revolt," 56–58.

explain why the revolt did not occur in the Galilee, but instead gave the reason why the Galileans did not join the fighters of the Second Revolt in Judah.

Oppenheimer's third argument is focused on the general situation in the Galilee: "It appears that during the period before the revolt the Galilee was subject to the close supervision and control of the Romans to prevent the possibility of total rebellion, and the Romans took care to create a barrier between the Galilee and Samaria in order to obstruct the creation of a continuous front and even blocked the roads to Judah."²¹⁸ The rejection of the second part of this explanation is similar to the rejection of his interpretation above; here, too, Oppenheimer explained why the Galileans did not join the rebels in Judah. However, the discussion is about a revolt in the area of Galilee itself. In my opinion, even the first part of his statement does not clarify the main reason for the non-participation of the Galilee in the revolt. The addition of a second legion to the stationary forces in the province after the War of Quietus and the establishment of its camp in Kefar Otnai in the Jezreel Valley were aimed at reinforcing the control over the population in the Jezreel Valley and the Galilee. This aim was also reflected in the founding of a camp in Tel Shalem²¹⁹ and a ramified road network that was paved at that time. Its main routes led from the legionnaire camp in Legio to the army camp stationed in Scythopolis. The many roads along this axis—such as the Sepphoris-Legio-Caesarea, Legio-Ptolemais, Coastal area-Geva-Legio, Scythopolis-Legio-Ptolemais, and Tiberias-Sepphoris roads—connected the region with key positions in the province. This road network allowed the legion encamped in Legio to maintain regular and rapid contact with the legion stationed in Bosra in Provincia Arabia, with Legio x Fretensis in Jerusalem, and with the capital of the province, Caesarea.²²⁰

The legionnaire camp in Legio and the system of roads around it were considered by scholars as evidence for the tightening of control over the Jewish population in the Jezreel Valley and in the Galilee, as reflected in the words of Rabbi Simeon Bar Yohai: "I can make it possible for people to go up from Tiberias to Sepphoris and from Tyre to Sidon because of the caves and towers

²¹⁸ Ibid., 63; idem, "Revolt," 64.

²¹⁹ See above, 49.

²²⁰ On the road system, see Benjamin Isaac, Israel Roll, *Roman Roads in Judaea 1: The Legio-Scythopolis Road*, Oxford 1982; I. Roll, "The Roads in Roman-Byzantine Palaestina and Arabia," in M. Piccirillo, E. Alliata (eds.), *The Madaba Map Centenary 1897-199: Travelling through the Byzantine Umayyad Period*, (Jerusalem: Studium Biblicum Franciscanum 1999): 109-113; idem, "Imperial Roads Across and Trade Routes beyond the Roman Provinces of Judaea-Palestina and Arabia: The State of Research," *Tel Aviv* 32 (2005): 107-118.

through the heart of the area of the Second Revolt: the Jerusalem-Hebron road and the Jerusalem-Beit Guvrin road.²²⁵ This means that the watchful eye of the Roman authorities also existed in Judah. Yet the revolt broke out in Judah, and the Galilee did not participate in it.

The fact that the same conditions prevailed in both areas demands a different reason for the non-participation of the Galilee in the revolt. In my view, the Jews of the Galilee had not yet recovered from the suppression of the War of Quietus, which probably had been part of the Diaspora revolt against the Romans and in which they had actively and energetically participated. They did not have the strength, such a short time after their uprising had been quashed, to go out once again in revolt against the Romans. If, on the eve of the War of Quietus, when the supervision by the Roman army in the Galilee area was extremely light, they failed utterly in their uprising, it does not seem reasonable to suppose that the introduction of a second legion into their area could have encouraged them to join again in a revolt. Besides, after the suppression of the War of Quietus, some of the Jewish population came to terms with the Roman authorities and responded to Hadrian's program of Hellenization, as findings in Tiberias and Sepphoris have indicated.²²⁶

2.1.4 *The Coastal Plain*

In the opinion of certain scholars, the first rebels of the revolt managed to take control over the coastal plain. The area of their conquest in this region extended from the Carmel mountain range in the north down to Gaza in the south; and only Caesarea, the capital of the province, remained under Roman control.²²⁷ These estimations were based on a few testimonies:

- a. The defeat of Legio XXII Deiotariana by the rebels in the southern part of the country allowed them to take control over the southern coastal plain.
- b. The bronze coins of the Second Revolt were mostly overstruck on the coins of Gaza and Ashkelon, which means that at least Ashkelon was conquered by the rebels.
- c. The traditions about Eleazar ben Harsum and evidence about the activities of the Jewish fleet and the Roman fleet testify to Jewish control over the coastal plain.²²⁸

²²⁵ Roll (above, note 198).

²²⁶ Oppenheimer, "Bar Kokhba Revolt," 44–45.

²²⁷ Yeivin, 94; Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 23–24.

²²⁸ Applebaum, *ibid.*

An examination of the facts and testimonies on which the scholars based their assumptions regarding the conquest of the coastal plain will clarify this issue in a completely different light.

2.1.4.1 The Disappearance of Legio XXII Deiotariana

The list of Roman legions dated to 162 CE consists of twenty-eight legions arranged in geographical order from west to east according to the provinces in which they were stationed at that time. To this list were added another two legions formed by Marcus Aurelius in 165 CE: Legio II Italica and Legio III Italica.²²⁹ Two veteran legions are missing from this list, Legio IX Hispana and Legio XXII Deiotariana, which had served in the Roman army since the days of Augustus Caesar.²³⁰ The last mention of Legio XXII Deiotariana is in the year 119 CE, in the fortress of Nicopolis, Egypt²³¹ and that of Legio IX Hispana in 107/108 CE in York, Britain.²³² The disappearance of these two legions is explained by the severe military losses that they suffered, losses that precluded the possibility of rehabilitating them and returning them to regular activity. Because of the lack of concrete evidence of the defeat of these legions, (1) a wide range of speculations and assumptions emerged about them during the period between their last mention and the year 162 CE and (2) an attempt was made to determine the historical occasion or event during which they were defeated.

The adoption of the assumption that the legions disappeared during the reign of Hadrian was very tempting.²³³ The disappearance of Legio XXII

229 See ILS 2288; *CIL*, VI, 3492, A, B. For the date of the inscription, see Henry M.D. Parker, *The Roman Legions* (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1971), 116, 166–168 (originally published by Oxford University Press, 1928. Reprinted with corrections and a new bibliography); Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 26. See also J.E. Bogares, “Die Besatzungstruppen des Legionslagers von Nijmegen im 2. Jahrhundert nach Christus,” in *Studien zum dem Militärgrenzen Roms* (Köln/Gräz: Böhlau Verlag, 1967), 72, note 95.

230 For the history of the two legions, see Lawrence J.F. Keppie, *The Making of the Roman Army from Republic to Empire* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1984): 121–123, 208–210; (= idem, “The History and the Disappearance of the Legion XXII Deiotariana,” Lawrence Keppie, *Legions and Veterans, Roman Army Years 1971–2000* (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2000), 225–232). See Sergio Daris, “Legio XXII Deiotariana,” in *Les légions de Rome sous le haut-empire. Actes du congrès de Lyon (17–19 Septembre 1998)*, ed. Y. Le Bohec (Lyon: Centre d’Etudes et de Recherches sur l’Occident Romain, 2000): Vol. 1. 365–367; Keppie, *ibid.*, 25–37.

231 *BGU*, I, 140.

232 *CIL*, VII, 24 = *RIB* 665 (York).

233 See George Ronald Watson, *The Roman Soldier* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1962), 23, 121; Sheppard S. Frere, *Britannia: A History of Roman Britain* (London, New York: Routledge

Deiotariana was attributed by scholars to the events of the Second Revolt: During the early stages of the revolt, this legion came to the assistance of the Roman auxiliary forces in Judaea and was destroyed by the Jewish rebels. This supposition rests on a lack of proof to the contrary: there is no definite evidence pointing to the existence of the legion at the end of the second decade of the second century or evidence of its part in the Second Revolt. Nevertheless, this did not prevent some scholars from dating its elimination between the years 132 and 135 CE.²³⁴ A few scholars have tried to confirm this supposition with evidence that, in their view, indicates the destruction of the legion during the Bar Kokhba revolt. Before reviewing this evidence, it is worth examining the movements of legions in the East in general and the composition of the Roman stationary forces in Egypt during the years 119–135 CE in particular.

In his discussion on the deployment of the legions in the East, Kennedy claimed that in 123 CE, Legio II Traiana and Legio III Cyrenaica were stationed in Egypt. These two legions, under the command of T. Claudius Quartinus, accompanied the military expedition of Hadrian against the Parthians. But shortly after their return to Egypt, Legio III Cyrenaica was transferred to Provincia Arabia and remained there until the fifth century.²³⁵ From then onward, the stationary forces in Egypt consisted of only one legion, Legio II Traiana, and there is evidence that it was located in Egypt in 127/128 CE.²³⁶ This and the fact that Legio XXII Deiotariana is mentioned for the last time in 119 CE indicate that this legion must have left Egypt or was destroyed after that date.²³⁷ A number of scholars gave an earlier date for the arrival of Legio XXII Deiotariana to Judaea. In their view, this legion was attached to the stationary forces in the province after replacing Legio II Traiana, which was transferred to Egypt:²³⁸

& Kegan Paul, 1978²), 161; David J. Breeze, *The Northern Frontiers of Roman Britain* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982), 6.

234 I will mention just a few studies, e.g., Oppenheimer, "Bar Kokhba Revolt," 60; Yeivin, 75; Stern, *Authors*, II. 398, with earlier bibliography. See also Edward Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire from the First Century AD to the Third* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 86; Martin Henig, "A Question of Standards," *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 2 (1983): 109–112.

235 Kennedy, "Sixth Legion," 304. On T. Claudius Quartinus' voyage, see *CIL*, XIII, 1802, 1803 = *ILS* 5919.

236 See *CIL*, III, 42, 14147⁶.

237 Kennedy, "Sixth Legion," 304–305; Parker (above, note 229), 162.

238 See Lawrence J.F. Keppie, "The Legionary Garrison of Judaea under Hadrian," *Latomus* 33 (1973): 863 [= Lawrence Keppie, *Legions and Veterans, Roman Army Years 1971–2000* (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2000): 219–224]; Altay Coşkun, "Galatische Legionäre in Ägypten:

1. Mantel, who dated the outbreak of the revolt to 125/126 CE, claimed that the legion arrived in Judaea in 127 CE. He further posited it was only in this year that it replaced Legio II Traiana, which was transferred to Egypt. In his opinion, the legion was sent urgently to Judaea as reinforcement, after Legio II Gallica had failed to suppress the rebels.²³⁹ However, Mantel's claim is not in accord with our knowledge about the beginning of the revolt nor with the composition of the stationary forces in Egypt during the period under discussion.²⁴⁰

2. Isaac and Roll dated the reinforcement of the stationary forces in Judaea by Legio XXII Deiotariana to the year 123 CE.²⁴¹ Their assumption is based on an inscription on the aqueduct in Caesarea that is inscribed within a *tabula ansata*. The inscription is difficult to decipher, and only some fragmentary letters remain of it. When it was first published, Negev suggested that it was possible to reconstruct from the inscription the name of the legion that had been engaged in repairing the aqueduct during the years 132–134 CE, and that its name had been erased afterwards. He suggested two possibilities for the name of the legion: Legio VI Ferrata and Legio XXII Deiotariana.²⁴² In a detailed report that he published later on, he preferred Legio VI Ferrata,²⁴³ which was also mentioned in other inscriptions on the aqueduct in Caesarea and at other sites throughout the province.²⁴⁴

Although Applebaum knew the problems involved in adopting the first suggestion of Negev, he identified the legion in the inscription with Legio XXII Deiotariana.²⁴⁵ This proposal was accepted by Isaac and Roll, who reexamined the inscription and claimed that the erased name of the legion was indeed

Die Konstituierung der legio XXII Deiotariana in der frühen Kaiserzeit," *Tyche* 23 (2008), 23–46; S. Daris (above, note 230), vol. 1, 365–367; Lawrence J.F. Keppie, "The History and the Disappearance of the Legion XXII Deiotariana," Lawrence Keppie, *Legions and Veterans, Roman Army Papers Years 1971–2000*, (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2000), 225–232 [= "The History and Disappearance of the Legion XXII Deiotariana," in *Greece and Rome in Eretz Israel: Collected Essays*, eds. A. Kasher, et al. (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 1990), 54–61 [in Hebrew].

239 Mantel "Causes," 42.

240 See Applebaum's critique in "Second Revolt," 48, note 53.

241 Isaac, Roll, "Early Years of Hadrian," 59.

242 Abraham Negev, "Caesarea Inscriptions of the Roman Legions on the Aqueduct," *Hadashot Arkheologiyot* 7(1963): 1–2 [in Hebrew]. See *CIJ*, vol. 2, 133, no. 1201.

243 Abraham Negev, "The High Level Aqueduct at Caesarea," *Israel Exploration Journal* 14 (1964): 244–245.

244 See above, 43–47.

245 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 36, 86, note 296.



FIGURE 2.8 *Erased Inscription of the Legio XXII Deiotariana? from the High-Level Aqueduct of Caesarea.*

PHOTO BY OR FIALKOV.

Legio XXII Deiotariana. The erasure of the name was an intentional *damnatio memoriae* because of its defeat during the Second Revolt.²⁴⁶

In addition to the problem of deciphering the inscription in its present state, there also exist some difficulties that undermine the assumptions of Isaac and Roll. First, if *Legio XXII Deiotariana* had indeed been attached as a second legion to the stationary forces in Judaea, its permanent camp should have been in Legio. Yet no evidence has been found there or anywhere in the province for its stay in Judaea.²⁴⁷ Secondly, according to the movements of the legions in the region during the years 117–135, only *Legio VI Ferrata* could have replaced *Legio II Traiana* in Judaea in 123 CE. The assumption of Isaac and Roll leaves *Legio II Traiana* without a permanent camp in the system of forces stationed in the eastern provinces.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶ Isaac, Roll, “Hadrian’s reign,” 60, note 38.

²⁴⁷ On Legio, see *Gazetteer*, 74, entry: Legio. Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 29. Isaac, Roll, “Legio II Traiana,” 154. Yotam Tepper, (above note 168).

²⁴⁸ See Kennedy, “Sixth Legion,” 308–309 and plates.



FIGURE 2.9 *Inscription of the Legio VI Ferrata from the High-Level Aqueduct of Caesarea (dated to Caesar Hadrian [ca. 130]. On display at Ralli Museum, Caesarea).*

PHOTO BY OR FIALKOV.

3. Further evidence for the possible existence of the lost legion in 132 CE can be found in the inscription from Solva in Noricum, dated to the year 138 CE.²⁴⁹ The inscription, set up by L. Cammius Secundinus and dedicated to his friend M. Gavius Maximus, describes the military and civilian career of Cammius Secundinus, who had begun his military service at the end of the first century as a soldier in Legio x Gemina stationed in Vindobona. After serving as a *primus pilus*, he rose in the ranks and was appointed as the prefect of a legion, the number and name of which are not clear. During the years 132–138, he was the governor of Noricum.²⁵⁰ In the opinion of Stein, who completed the dam-

²⁴⁹ See *CIL*, III, 5328.

²⁵⁰ On the inscription and the career of Cammius Secundinus, see Gerhard Winkler, *Die Reichsbeamten von Noricum und ihr Personal bis zum Ende der Römischen Herrschaft*,

aged part of the inscription, Cammius Secundinus served as a prefect in Legio XXII Deiotariana, which—in Stein's view—meant that the legion was still in existence and active under the command of Cammius Secundinus during the year 132 CE; Stein linked the disappearance of the legion with the period of the Second Revolt.²⁵¹ However, according to another completion of the damaged part of the inscription, Cammius Secundinus served as a prefect in Legio X Gemina, in which he had begun his military service.²⁵² This reading seems preferable to me; therefore, I reject any connection of the inscription with *Legio XXII Deiotariana*.

4. Sextus Julius Africanus, *Kestos*, 7,106–109:

[poisoning of wine] The Pharisees prided themselves on once having killed a **phalanx** of the Romans by feigning of flight, for feeding well, as appeared, they then withdrew, giving way, leaving behind the prepared lunch. But the wine was treacherous, poisoned by lime quenched in it.²⁵³

Additional evidence for the destruction of the legion during the Second Revolt was found in these words of Sextus Julius Africanus, a Christian chronographer who lived at the end of the second and the beginning of the third century CE.²⁵⁴ In the context of his discussion about poisoning by means of tainting wine, he noted that the Pharisees took pride in having once killed a phalanx of Roman soldiers by poisoning their wine. This paragraph was considered as a reference to the destruction of Legio XXII Deiotariana in 134 CE, before Julius Severus arrived in Judaea. Africanus, who was born and lived in Aelia Capitolina, preserved a tradition passing among the soldiers of Legio X Fretensis stationed in the city about the fate of Legio XXII Deiotariana.²⁵⁵ Even if this interpretation

(Wien: H. Böhlau, 1969), 64–66; Géza Alföldy, *Noricum* (London, Boston: Routledge & K. Paul, 1974), 274; Brian Dobson, *Die Primipilares*, Entwicklung und Bedeutung, Laufbahnen und Persönlichkeiten eines römischen Offiziersranges (Köln: Rheinland-Verlag; Bonn: in Kommission bei R. Habelt, 1978), 247–248.

251 *PIR*², C 370.

252 Hans-Georg Pflaum, *Les Carrières Procuratoriennes Équestres sous le Haut-Empire Romain* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1960), 259–262, note 108.

253 Francis C.R. Thee, *Julius Africanus and the Early Christian View of Magic* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [P. Siebeck], 1984), 114–115.

254 For a possible Jewish origin of Africanus, see Ephrat Habas (Rubin), “The Jewish Origin of Julius Africanus,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 45 (1994): 86–91.

255 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 26, citing Harnack: “auch erzählt er beiläufig, die Pharisäer hätten ein römisches Regiment durch vergifteten Wein vernichtet.” See Adolf von Harnack,

is correct, and Africanus was indeed referring to this lost legion, the apologetic tone of his words places their reliability in doubt. The paragraph seems to echo the spirit of a Christian of the second to third century CE who, merely for theological reasons, accused the Pharisees of wine poisoning. Moreover, one should not regard the quotation above as proof of the disappearance of the legion because Africanus is not speaking about the poisoning of a legion, but only of a phalanx. And from his words, one cannot identify the unit and the event to which he is referring. Gelzer, for example, assumed that Africanus was speaking about an incident that occurred during the Great Revolt of 66 CE.²⁵⁶ The apologetic character of the paragraph did not prevent Applebaum from adding it to other evidence which, in his opinion, even located the place of the battle in which the legion was destroyed. According to Applebaum, there are three indications that link the legion's destruction to Sha'ar Ha-Gai, east of Emmaus.²⁵⁷

- a. In 220 CE, Julius Africanus headed a delegation sent by the city of Emmaus to Emperor Elagabalus. The main achievement of the delegation was that Emmaus was turned into a polis called Nicopolis.²⁵⁸ The name *Nicopolis* was usually given to cities around which glorious victories were won. For Applebaum, this was the background for the change in the name of Emmaus, which occurred after a military victory in the area that was conducted in revenge for the severe military defeat in earlier times.²⁵⁹
- b. The establishment of Legio XXII Deiotariana and the name *Nicopolis* are linked on the basis of the fact that the city of Nicopolis in Armenia was founded in honor of Pompey's victory over Mithridates in 66 BCE.²⁶⁰

TUGAL, VIII, 4, Leipzig 1898, 43–44; Félix-Marie Abel, *Histoire de la Palestine*, II) Paris: J. Gabalda, 1952): 23, note 1.

256 Heinrich, Gelzer, *Sextus Julius Africanus, und die byzantinische Chronographie* (Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1898): 3ff.

257 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 26; idem, "Results," 394, note 110.

258 See Mildenberg, "Coins and Documents," 326; Kindler, "Bar Kokhba Coins," 160; See also Leo Mildenberg, "The Monetary System of the Bar Kokhba Coinage," in *The Patterns of Monetary Development in Phoenicia and Palestine in Antiquity*, ed. Arie Kindler Tel-Aviv, Schocken, 1967), 42–43; Arie Kindler, "The Monetary Pattern and Function of the Jewish Coins," *ibid.*, 201.

259 Applebaum, "Results," 394, note 110.

260 For the founding of eight cities by Pompey to commemorate his victory in 66 BCE, see Cassius Dio, 37, 20, 7; Appian, *Mithridates*, 115.

Participating in this victory were two units of Deiotarus, King of Galatia, and one of them became the nucleus for Legio XXII Deiotariana.²⁶¹

- c. On a coin identified by De Saulcy as minted in Nicopolis-Emmaus, the symbols of a wild boar and wolf appear.²⁶² Applebaum claimed that the wolf was adopted as the symbol of the legion established after the disappearance of Legio XXII Deiotariana.²⁶³

These three indications, which presume to link the fate of the lost legion with the area of Emmaus, do not adequately do so. First, there is no proof of any Roman victory in that region that could have been the motive for the change in name to Nicopolis-Emmaus. Smallwood, for example, suggested a Roman military victory during the Great Revolt as a possible background for the name change.²⁶⁴ This suggestion is supported by the evidence from the coins of the city, in which a new calendar sequence begins with the year 70 CE.²⁶⁵ Additionally, when the delegation led by Africanus was sent to the emperor, the name that was then given to Emmaus was *Antoninopolis*.²⁶⁶ Also, the coin with the symbol of a wolf and wild boar was associated with the city of Nicopolis Epiri and therefore has no connection with Emmaus.²⁶⁷

Further evidence for the place where the legion was destroyed appears in the source that describes the actions of two brothers from Kefar Haruba “who did not allow any Roman to pass there, because they killed him.” In their words, “the conclusion of the whole matter is that we must take Hadrian’s crown and set it upon the head of Simon.”²⁶⁸ Gichon found evidence in this source for the disappearance of Legio XXII Deiotariana, which was defeated by the Jewish rebels in Kefar Haruba in the southern part of the Judean plain. In his view, the words *we must take Hadrian’s crown and set it upon the head of Simon* refer to the standards of the defeated legion that was put to flight by the rebels. The standards that bore the symbols and emblems of the legion were destroyed,

²⁶¹ See Keppie, above note 238, 212.

²⁶² Saulcy, Félicien de, *Numismatique de la Terre Sainte*, (Paris: J. Rothschild, 1874), Pl. vi. No. 3.

²⁶³ Applebaum, “Results,” 394, note 110.

²⁶⁴ Smallwood, 343, 492, note 24; See Sozomen, *Church History*, v. 21. He argued that in the year 70, Emmaus had already been named *Nicopolis*.

²⁶⁵ Hill, 109, nos. 1–2. Faustina’s coins of 142/143. The date of the coins is 72, meaning that the dating started at 70. See also *ibid.*, no. 3, a coin of Lucius Verus dated to 91, that is 161/162.

²⁶⁶ Smallwood, 492.

²⁶⁷ See Friedrich Imhoof-Blummer, *Kleinasiatische Münzen*, Band 1, (Wien: A. Hölder, 1901), p. 4. See also Hill, xxx, who argued that this coin is characteristic of Nicopolis Lycia.

²⁶⁸ *Lamentation Rabba* 2. 5 (19); *ṭṭ*, Taanit 2 69a. See above, 98–101.

and the rest were kept as mementoes of their victory on the battlefield.²⁶⁹ The link that Gichon drew between the source and the defeat of the legion is not convincing because the source has a folkloristic coloring and cannot serve as reliable historical evidence. In addition, the identification of Kefar Haruba in the southern part of the Judaeian plain is uncertain.²⁷⁰

The Bronze Coins of the Second Revolt

Another link between the disappearance of Legio XXII Deiotariana and the Second Revolt can be found in the coins of the Second Revolt. Kindler claimed that the rebels had destroyed the legion in the south of the country, took charge of its treasury, and used its coins later on to mint the coins of the revolt.²⁷¹ Applebaum added to this assumption, that this victory opened the way for the rebels to take control over the southern part of the coastal plain, including the cities of Ashkelon and Gaza. The coins of these cities were then overstruck as coins of the revolt.²⁷²

The evidence of the coins does not provide any assistance. If the legion did indeed arrive in Judaea directly from its base in Egypt, why were its soldiers paid with coins originating from Gaza and Ashkelon?²⁷³ Also, if the rebels had taken hold of the legion's treasury, why were the coins of the revolt not imprinted upon those that bore the reverse-side impression of the legion itself?

The supposed link that was asserted between the control of the southern coastal plain by the rebels and the fact that most of the coins of the Second Revolt were overstruck on the coins of Ashkelon and Gaza seems baseless. A review of the Second Revolt coins shows that most of them were overstruck on coins that had already been minted years before the revolt. For example, some of the coins had the inscription *For the liberation of Jerusalem* imprinted upon Ptolemy and Seleucid coins²⁷⁴ or on a coin of Mattathias Antigonus.²⁷⁵

269 Mordechai Gichon, "The Bar Kochba War: A Colonial Uprising against Imperial Rome (131/2–135 CE)," *Revue Internationale d'Histoire Militaire* 42 (1979): 89.

270 See above, 98–99.

271 See Arie Kindler, "The Coinage of the Bar Kokhba War," in *Dating and Meaning of Ancient Jewish Coins and Symbols: Six Essays in Jewish Numismatics* (Tel Aviv: Schocken Pub. House, 1958), 68.

272 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 23.

273 Mildenberg, "Coins," 87 and note 232.

274 Meshorer, *Jewish Ancient Coinage*, 276, no. 81c was overstruck on a coin dated to the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus; 277, no. 81d on a Seleucid coin. See also Edgar Rogers, *A Handy Guide to Jewish Coins* (London: Spink & Son, Ltd, 1914), 92, no. 4; pl. VII, no. 4, Ptolemy II Philadelphus.

275 Meshorer, *ibid.*, no. 77c.

A coin of year two *for the liberation of Israel* was overstruck on a coin of Ashkelon dated to the year 85 CE.²⁷⁶ Another coin, of the third year of the revolt, was overstruck on an Ashkelon coin dated to the year 121 CE,²⁷⁷ and a coin dated 96 CE from Antioch bore the imprint of Year Two of the revolt.²⁷⁸ In addition, quite a few of the Second Revolt coins were imprinted on coins from the period of Vespasian, Domitian, Nerva, and Trajan.²⁷⁹ These examples prove the lack of any connection between the use of the Ashkelon and Gaza coins for a secondary mintage and the conquest of these cities during the Second Revolt. For their secondary mintage after the revolt began, the rebels made use of coins that were currently in circulation in the local markets of Judaea, without consideration for their origins.²⁸⁰ Another proof offered on this matter comes from the secondary mintage on coins with the emblem of Legio x Fretensis on the reverse. For example, the bronze coin on which there is the inscription *Shimon* was overstruck on a coin that had previously had the image of one of the emperors and the emblem of Legio x Fretensis on its reverse side.²⁸¹

Mildenberg, in his discussion on the question of the monetary source for coin imprinting by the rebels, also claimed that money collected from the Jewish population was taken partly as a loan to finance the revolt, partly as tax, and partly as rents paid by farmers who leased the Roman crown lands conquered by the rebels.²⁸² Even from a study of the numismatic finds in Ashkelon and other cities around the country, one cannot reach any conclusions about the connection of these cities and the events of the Second Revolt.

Ashkelon, during the period of Hadrian's reign, minted coins in the years 116/117 to 123/124 CE in regular order. After this, there was a break in the minting; in 127/128 CE it was renewed and continued for the years 129/130, 132/133, and 133/134, when coin minting ceased and did not resume until the time of

276 Rosenberger, 83, no. 25.

277 Ibid., no. 26.

278 Ibid., no. 29.

279 Meshorer, *Jewish Ancient Coinage*, from the days of Vespasian, no. 37a; 51 Hu; Domitian, no. 4b; Nerva, no. 85; Trajan, no. 10a, 10b, 49b, 51, 59b, 62a. See also Rogers, (above, note 43), 91, no. 3.

280 Kindler, "Bar Kokhba Coins," 160.

281 Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, 67; 127 no. 211b, and plate XXVIII, no. 211b. Rosenberger, 82, no. 24. See also Dan Barag, "The Countermarks of the Legio Decima Fretensis," in *The Patterns of Monetary Development in Phoenicia and Palestine in Antiquity, Proceedings of the International Numismatic Convention, in Jerusalem, 1963*, ed. Arie Kindler (Tel-Aviv: Schocken, 1967), 121, plate x.

282 Mildenberg, "Coins and Documents," 326.

Antoninus Pius in 141/142 CE.²⁸³ In view of these facts, how can the minting for the years 132/133 and 133/134 CE be explained if indeed the rebels had conquered the city during the first stages of the revolt? On the other hand, what were the circumstances and causes for the cessation in minting during the years 134/135 to 141/142 CE.

For Gaza, there is no evidence at all for local coin minting during the reign of Domitian and Trajan. However, the city did mint coins from the year 130/131 until 137/138 CE.²⁸⁴ These facts evoke a number of questions: How can the absence of coin minting in the city during the reign of Domitian and Trajan and a significant part of Hadrian's reign (from 117 to 129/130 CE) be explained? How can the fact that precisely during the period of the revolt, Gaza conducted a regulated minting of coins be resolved with the claim that the city may have been conquered by the rebels? Must a conclusion of non-conquest be reached in light of the answer to those questions?

The link between the events of the revolt and the minting of coins in the Greek cities of Palestine was stressed by Applebaum: "In Tiberias and in some of the Greek cities coin minting ceased entirely during the period of the war, apparently because of the road blocks and general emergency conditions, and there is no possibility of knowing whether the rebels broke into these cities or not."²⁸⁵ But these words do not correspond with the coin finds in the four cities of the northern region that were under Roman control during the revolt and were adjacent to areas considered to be safe from the rebels. In these cities, we would expect regulated local minting, yet the numismatic finds indicate a situation that is almost the reverse:

1. The local coin minting in Tiberias was irregular with prolonged cessations. During the reign of Trajan, coins were minted for the years 99/100 CE; after a break of a few years, minting was renewed during the years 107/108–109/110 CE and during the reign of Hadrian, in 119/120 CE. After this date, no local coins were minted until the time of Commodus in 188/189 CE.²⁸⁶ The cessation of coin minting during the reign of

283 On the minting for the years 116/117–123/124, see Rosenberger, *City Coins*, vol. 1, 53, nos. 144–160; for the years 123/124, see Hill, 28, no. 180; for 127/128, see Rosenberger, *City Coins*, vol. 1, 55, nos. 160–161; for 129/130, *ibid.*, 56 no. 162; for 132/133, *ibid.*, 56, nos. 164–166; for 133/134, *ibid.*, 57, nos. 164–167; for 141/142, *ibid.*, 57, no. 170.

284 On the minting in Gaza, see Rosenberger, *City Coins*, vol. 2, 54–57, nos. 52–69.

285 Applebaum, "Second Revolt," 50; *idem*, *Prolegomena*, 23.

286 On the minting from Tiberias in the Year 99/100, see Rosenberger, *City Coins*, vol. 3, 64, no. 6; for the year 119/120, *ibid.*, 65–66, nos. 12–15; in 188/189, *ibid.*, 66, no. 16. See also Arie Kindler, *The Coins of Tiberias* (Tiberias 1962).

Hadrian predates the revolt by twelve years, and therefore it cannot be attributed to a general state of emergency. Besides, Tiberias was under Roman control and adjoined the eastern end of the fortified road between Tiberias and Sepphoris.²⁸⁷

2. The numismatic finds in Sepphoris include the coins from the period of Nero in 68/69 CE and the undated ones from the period of Trajan. No coins were found for the period of Hadrian's reign, and coin minting was resumed only in the time of Antoninus Pius.²⁸⁸ Local minting ceased about fifteen years before the revolt, and therefore it is preferable to attribute the cessation to the events of the War of Quietus and not to the Second Revolt.²⁸⁹
3. In Gabba, at the western end of the Jezreel Valley, not far from the Roman legion camp in Legio,²⁹⁰ there is evidence of irregular local coin minting, which ceased during the period of Domitian and resumed only during the period of Trajan in the year 110/111 CE. After this, there is a break until the time of Hadrian, when there is evidence of three coin mintages: in 116/117, in 120/121, and during the period of the revolt in 133/134 CE. After that year, coin minting ceased until the year 150/151.²⁹¹
4. Scythopolis, in the region of which a Roman company was encamped at Tel Shalem, did not mint any coins during the Hadrian period. Local coin minting ceased during the period of Nero and resumed only in the days of Antoninus Pius.²⁹²

The numismatic finds from these cities make it clear that one cannot relate them to the events of the Second Revolt. Actually, only in those cities that were outside the reach of the rebels that the local minting of coins was irregular. This phenomenon can be understood against the background of urban minting policy throughout the country. Again, like with the minting in Gaza

287 Applebaum, "Second Revolt," 50.

288 On the coins of Sepphoris for the years 68/69, see Rosenberger, *City Coins*, vol. 3, 60, nos. 1–2; from Trajan's reign, see *ibid.*, 60–61, nos. 3–6; and for the renewal of minting during the reign of Antoninus, see *ibid.*, 61, nos. 7–10.

289 See Yaakob Meshorer, "Sepphoris' Coins as an Historical Source," *Zion* 43 (1978): 190 [in Hebrew]; Yoseph Geiger, "Sepphoris and the 'War of Qitos,'" *Cathedra* 8 (1978): 69–70 [in Hebrew].

290 On Gabba, see Schürer, II, 164–165.

291 On the coins of Gabba, see Rosenberger, *City Coins*, vol. 2, 44–46, nos. 4–15; p. 81, no. 2.

292 On the minting during the reign of Nero, for the year 66/67, see Rosenberger, *City Coins*, vol. 3, p. 28, nos. 7–10; On Antoninus Pius' coins, see *ibid.*, 28–29, nos. 7–11; See also Augusto Spijkerman, *The Coins of the Decapolis and Provincia Arabia* (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1978), 188, no. 4: 1–1A–1B; No. 5.

and Ashkelon, there is no proof here for the conquest of those two cities by the rebels, but merely evidence of the economic situation in the region that was flooded with coins that served as common currency during the period of the revolt.²⁹³

2.1.4.2 Activities of the Jewish and Roman Fleets

In accordance with the two inscriptions relating to the Syrian fleet (*classis Syriaca*), Applebaum claimed that there was naval activity during the Second Revolt and that the rebels had control over the coastal plain.²⁹⁴ Momsen had already anticipated Applebaum's claim in 1877, when he proposed that one of the inscriptions indicated the activity of a Second Revolt fleet.²⁹⁵ In the inscription from Colonia Saldae in Provincia Mauretania,²⁹⁶ the name mentioned is *Sextus Cornelius Dexter*, serving as a praefectus classis Syriacae, who was decorated by Hadrian with the title of *dona militaria* and awarded with the Vexillum and the Hasta Pura for his part in the Bellum Iudaicum. Although there is no evidence for naval battles, the inscription was interpreted to be a testimony for them.²⁹⁷ In addition to this testimony, a second truncated inscription from Rome, which offers words of praise (*elogium*) to the emperor or to a senior military officer, also mentions the activity of the fleet in the war in Judaea.²⁹⁸ Certain scholars in the past have claimed that it was not possible to determine whether the reference was to the activities of the fleet during the Great Revolt or during the Bar Kokhba revolt.²⁹⁹ Alföldy, who reread the inscription, dated it to the second century, and since in the sources of that period, the term *bellum* was used solely in relation to the Bar Kokhba revolt, Eck decided to link the two sources as proof of naval battles during the Second

293 Uriel Rappaport, "Askelon and the Coins of Judaea," *Studies in the History of the Jewish People* (1978): 77, note 8 [in Hebrew].

294 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 124; Smallwood, 449; J. Jarrett, "An Album of Equestrians from North Africa in the Emperor's Service," *Epigraphische Studien* 9 (1972): 173, no. 48. For a detailed discussion, see Eck, "Hadrian, the Bar Kokhba Revolt, and the Epigraphic Transmission," in *Bar Kokhba Reconsidered*, 163–165; Eck, "Epigraphic Transmission," 163–165.

295 See Theodor Momsen, *Ephemeris Epigraphica* 3 (1877): 331.

296 *CIL* VIII 8934 = *ILS* 1400.

297 Eck, "Epigraphic Transmission," 163, note 43. He rejects the attempts of scholars who linked Dexter's decoration to his service at the Ala I Augusta Gemellae.

298 *CIL*, VI, 1565.

299 Smallwood, 449, note 81; Dietmar Kienast, *Untersuchungen zu den Kriegsflotten der Römischen Kaiserzeit* (Bonn: R. Habelt, 1966), 96, note 50. He rejects any link between the inscription and the Second Revolt.

Revolt—and not battles during the Diaspora revolt in the years 115–117 CE.³⁰⁰ But what about the possibility that the inscription referred to the Great Revolt of 66–73 CE? This has also been suggested by Kienast, who thought the inscription described events that occurred during the Great Revolt.³⁰¹

With regard to the first inscription, scholars have been undecided about the service for which Cornelius Dexter was decorated, whether it was for his command in the Syrian fleet³⁰² or for his position as prefect of the *I Augusta Gemellae Colonorum*.³⁰³ Eck rejected this indecision and claimed that from the order of the list of his functions, the *dona militaria* decoration should be ascribed to his command in the Syrian fleet and not to his service in the *I Augusta Gemellae Colonorum*.³⁰⁴ Even if Cornelius Dexter won military awards as a commander in the Syrian fleet during the Second Revolt, the main question still remains: where was the arena of naval warfare in which Dexter had so excelled that Hadrian saw fit to grant him a decoration for bravery? Eck himself was aware of the difficulties associated with this question, and he therefore considered very carefully the possible suggestions for the naval-battle arena in connection with the Second Revolt. He proposed three sites for this action: in the Kinneret (Sea of Galilee), the Dead Sea, or the Mediterranean. If the reference was to the Kinneret, he assumed that the navy must have served mainly to transport soldiers and food for the battles that took place in Perea. The involvement of the Jews in Provincia Arabia, as noted in the Babatha and Salome Komaise archives from Nahal Hever and the various testimonies in connection with Haterius Nepos, support the possibility that it was the Dead Sea. In Eck's view, all of that support is an indication of the ties between the Jews who lived on both banks of the Dead Sea. Perhaps the function of Cornelius Dexter and the Syrian fleet was to break these ties and to isolate the Nabataean rebels, perhaps even to cut off the food supplies for the rebels.³⁰⁵ But Eck summed up this issue by noting that these battles probably occurred

300 Eck, "Epigraphic Transmission," 163, note 43.

301 Kienast, (above, note 299), 96, note 50; See also Smallwood, 449, note 81.

302 Peter Thomsen, "Die Römische Flotte in Palestina Syrien," *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 68 (1946–1951): 80.

303 See Chester G. Starr, *The Roman Imperial Navy 31 BC–AD 324*, (Cambridge: W. Heffer, 1960), 114–115; see also Hubert Devijver, *Prosographia Militarium Equestrum*, Quae fuerunt ab Augusto ad Gallienum, 1 (Leuven: Universitaire Pers Leuven, 1976), 294–296: c 234.

304 Eck, "Epigraphic Transmission," 163, note 43.

305 Eck, "Epigraphic Transmission," 163; Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 81, note 215 mentions Lasia Galilee's understanding that the evidence for naval battles during the Second Revolt should be linked to naval clashes that took place in the Dead Sea. See also Roi Porat, Hanan Eshel, Uri Davidovich, Sorin, Lisker, Eli Raz, Amos Frumkin, "Bar Kokhba Refuge

in the Mediterranean.³⁰⁶ I, myself, believe that the decorations are related to naval activities in the Mediterranean, but I prefer to ascribe the decorations of Cornelius Dexter to his actions in the transportation of soldiers and equipment across the Mediterranean. It is very difficult to believe that the Jewish rebels had a fleet that was capable of confronting a Roman fleet or to attribute the decorations to actual naval battles that took place in that region.

In view of the above, I also have to reject Applebaum's assumption of a connection between the tradition about Rabbi Eleazar ben Harsum, owner of a thousand ships that were all destroyed, and possible naval battles in Judaea during the Second Revolt.³⁰⁷ In addition, my discussion of this source above³⁰⁸ precludes the acceptance of the assumption from which it derives concerning naval battles that might indicate control over the coastal plain by the rebels.³⁰⁹

Archaeological Finds

Applebaum found further evidence for Jewish control over the coastal plain in the archaeological finds in Tel Qasile, Shikmona, and Khirbet Ibrachtas.³¹⁰ But an examination of these three sites arouses doubts about this assumption. The excavations in Tel Qasile indicate the destruction of the settlement and its reestablishment during the period of Septimius Severus. Since one cannot date its destruction or relate it with any certainty either to the Great Revolt or the Bar Kokhba revolt, it is difficult to make use of this finding to support any evidence as to whether this place was under Jewish control during the Second Revolt.³¹¹ As to the excavations in Shikmona, as noted above, a fort that, according to Applebaum, was meant to guard the road along the foot of the Carmel mountain range was built by the Romans at the site only after the Second Revolt.³¹² In the third site, Khirbet Ibrachtas, south of Hadera, no remains of any destruction of the second century CE were found, and the place

Caves in the Area between Ein Gedi and Qumran in Light of the Renewed Research Project in the Judean Desert," *Journal of Dead Sea and Arava Research* 2 (2010): 1–20.

306 Eck, "Epigraphic Transmission," 165.

307 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 24.

308 See above, 93–94.

309 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 81, note 215; Smallwood, 449, connected the naval activities to the defense and the taking over of the coastal cities from the rebels.

310 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 24.

311 On the excavations in Tel Qasile, see Benjamin Meisler, "Excavations in Tel Qasile," *Eretz Israel* 1 (1951): 45–71, See mainly pages 69–70 on the "middle" Roman period.

312 See above, 43.

continued to exist even in the third century. Therefore, any conclusions that this area was under Jewish control are not possible.³¹³

The three sites upon which Applebaum relied to support his claim for Jewish control over the coastal plain do not provide compelling evidence of such. If indeed these sites were under Jewish control during the revolt and the Romans were forced to fight in order to recapture them from the rebels, one would expect to find a destruction layer at those three sites dated to the period of the Second Revolt. But the findings are otherwise: Only in Tel Qasile can a destruction layer be found, but this was dated by Applebaum himself to the period of the Great Revolt when Antipatris was also destroyed. No evidence is found either at Tel Qasile or at Antipatris for destruction during the second century CE.

Another argument against the possibility that the Jews controlled the northern part of the coastal plain comes from the location of Caesarea in the center of this region. It is not reasonable to suppose that the Romans would have allowed the rebels to isolate the capital of the province and to separate it from the two legions encamped in the country, especially in consideration of the ramified road network that had been developed from Caesarea to the various regions throughout the province.³¹⁴

2.1.5 *Judaea*

My discussion regarding the participation of Judaea in the course of the Second Revolt is grounded in a wealth of literary, archaeological, epigraphic, and numismatic evidence. However, there are two difficulties that raise doubts regarding this varied material. First, the rich sources mainly describe the final stages of the revolt, when the Romans had already taken the initiative into their own hands through the arrival of Julius Severus in Judaea. This event was the start of the vigorous Roman offensive that eventually led to the suppression of the Second Revolt. Most of the testimonies therefore portray the situation of the rebels at the last stage of the revolt. Learning from such testimony about the rebel's situation, the area under their control, and their methods of warfare in the earlier successful stages when fortune smiled upon them is not always possible. Second, the information at our disposal about the territorial extension of the Second Revolt in the area of Judaea is subject to controversy over the question of whether Jerusalem had indeed been conquered by the rebels.

³¹³ Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 24.

³¹⁴ On the road system, see Israel Roll, "The Roman Road System in Judaea," *Jerusalem Cathedra* 3 (1983): 136–161. See also Shimeon Dar, Shimeon Applebaum, "The Roman Road from Antipatris to Caesarea," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 105 (1973): 91–99.

Below is a discussion of the various sources and testimonies indicating the participation of Judaea in the Second Revolt.

Rabbinical Sources

A source in *Lamentations Rabba* 1:5 concerning the three guard posts—Ḥamatha, Beth El, and Kefar Lakita—that were set up by Hadrian in order to block the escape routes of the rebels during the final stages of the revolt was previously examined in this document. That analysis asserted that all three of them, in spite of the difficulties in identifying and locating them, were situated in Judaea. The dispute in the research literature over these three locations focused on the question of which main traffic artery the Romans had blocked to bar the way for retreating rebels. Was it the highway in the northern part of Judaea, the road between Ḥalḥul and Tekoa, or another route? Whatever the answer, it is clear that all attempts at identification are focused within the area of Judaea and especially around Bethar, which was the last stronghold of the Bar Kokhba fighters.³¹⁵

There are many and varied written sources about Bethar at the final stage of revolt suppression in Judaea, when it was the last refuge for the fighters of the Second Revolt and when Severus laid siege to it. The centrality of Bethar in Jewish tradition is testified to in a source from the Jerusalem Talmud that says that “for three and a half years the emperor Hadrian surrounded Bethar.”³¹⁶ There is no doubt that the source describes the entire period of the revolt and not just the duration of the siege.³¹⁷ The siege period was much shorter, if we take into account that Bethar was conquered in August 135 CE,³¹⁸ that Severus apparently arrived in Judaea only in May 134 CE,³¹⁹ and that before laying siege

315 See above, my discussion, 154–158. See also the detailed article of Büchler, “Schauplätze,” who placed the entire revolt in Judaea.

316 *TJ*, Ta’aniot, 68d; *Lamentation Rabba*, 2:4: “For three years and a half Hadrian laid siege to Bethar.”

317 Oppenheimer, “Bar Kokhba Revolt,” 67.

318 See Eusebius, *HE*, IV, 63: “The war raged most fiercely in the eighteenth year of Hadrian, at the city of Bethar, which was a very secure fortress, situated not far from Jerusalem. When the siege had lasted a long time, and the rebels had been driven to the last extremity by hunger and thirst.” On the date, see Fritz Moris Heichelheim, “New Light on the End of the Bar Kokba’s War,” *Jewish Quarterly Review* 34 (1943/44): 61–63.

319 On the date of Severus’ arrival, see Stern, *Authors*, II, 404. See also David Atkinson, “The Governors of Britain from Claudius to Diocletian,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 12 (1922): 66. Cotton, “Documentary Papyri,” 225, note 35, rejects this dating and refers to Arthur [sic!] R. Birley, *The Fasti of Roman Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 106 ff., who dated Severus’ arrival to 134 CE.

to Bethar, Severus was mainly engaged in eliminating rebel pockets in the Judean hills. The fortress was not easily conquered, and as will be discussed later, the Romans invested great effort in its conquest, which continued for a number of months.

Schäfer, in his comprehensive and in-depth discussion of rabbinical sources that describe Bethar during the course of the revolt and the reasons for its destruction,³²⁰ contended that most of the sources are the products of the creativity, processing, and editing of various compilers who wished to endow a dramatic dimension to the traditions about Bethar. Some of the sources have no historical value and are not related to the Second Revolt at all.³²¹ But even Schäfer himself, in his discussion of the rabbinical sources,³²² did not claim that the siege of Bethar, the difficulties involved in its course, and its eventual fall are not historical facts.³²³ Archaeological findings in Bethar³²⁴ testify to a large-scale system the Romans constructed at that site in order to besiege and overthrow it.

The rebels exploited the natural features of Bethar, which stood 700 m above sea level and rose about 150 m over Wadi a-Sakha that surrounded it on three sides: east, north, and west. Easy access to it was from the south, but this side was blocked by a moat 5-m deep and 15-m wide that extended for a length of 80 m to prevent free entry into the fortress. The fortress itself was surrounded by a wall on which towers, bastions, and gates were erected that allowed the besieged full control over the city. In order to overthrow it with its topographical advantages and fortifications system, the Romans built a dyke of 4000 m in

320 Schäfer, 136–193, ch. 6: *Der Bethar—Komplex in Rabbinischen Literatur*.

321 See Schäfer, 191–193 for his summary.

322 These sources include various reasons for the destruction of Bethar: “Because of an Axle of a Wagon” (above, 97, no. 2), “because she rejoiced in the calamity of Jerusalem” (above, 95, no. 2), and the “Betrayal of the Cuthean” (above, 98, no. 3). In light of my strictures concerning these sources, I cannot interpret them as historical sources, and therefore they cannot be linked with the Second Revolt. As for the result of the destruction, there is no doubt that the sources exaggerate Roman cruelty and the numbers of the slain. This exaggeration stems from the significance that the rebels gave to the surrender and destruction of Bethar. See Oppenheimer, “Bar Kokhba Revolt,” 67.

323 Schäfer, 116.

324 On the archaeological findings from Bethar, see W.D. Carroll, “Bittir and Its Archaeological Remains,” *Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 5 (1923–4), 77–103. Yeivin, 105–121; David Ussishkin, “Betar: The Last Stronghold of Bar Kochba,” *Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society* 6 (1986–87): 49–5; idem, “Archaeological Sounding at Bethar, Bar Kokhba’s Last Stronghold,” *Tel Aviv* 20 (1993): 66–97; idem, “Excavations at Betar: The Last Stronghold of Bar Kochba,” *Qadmoniot* 41 (2008): 108–112 [in Hebrew].

length, a rampart over the moat, and two square camps, all of which enclosed the besieged within the city.³²⁵

An archaeological survey of Judaea included a number of sites that had served as Roman camps and observation posts around Bethar,³²⁶ such as the two camps on the lower slopes that led to Bethar from the south;³²⁷ Khirbet Um Kalah, a citadel at the top of a hill that controlled access to Bethar from the southwest through Wadi Ein Gami'a;³²⁸ a Roman camp near Al-Khader that controlled the road between Bethlehem and the Valley of Elah and the access roads to Bethar;³²⁹ and Khirbet Kebar, a citadel at the top of a mountain range overlooking the main routes to Bethar from the south and east sides.³³⁰ These positions were part of the plan by Severus to prevent the besieged from escaping the city, similar to the three guard posts that (according to tradition) Hadrian had set up. The following tradition testifies to the attempts at escaping from the besieged city: "Again, an act of sixty men who went down to the *Karkum* at Bethar and not a single one of them came back. and the matter came before the sages, who permitted their wives to remarry".³³¹

Oppenheimer alleged that this source does not testify that the besieged intended to escape from the city, but rather that they intended to attack the Roman camps around Bethar.³³² I contend that it is preferable to regard this source as recounting attempts to escape from the besieged city, a view

325 Yeivin, *ibid.*

326 Kokhavi, *Judea, Samaria and the Golan*, 24.

327 Kokhavi, *Judea, Samaria and the Golan*, 37, site 9.

328 Kokhavi, *Judea, Samaria and the Golan*, 38, site 16.

329 Kokhavi, *Judea, Samaria and the Golan*, 40, site 23.

330 Kokhavi, *Judea, Samaria and the Golan*, 30, site 26.

331 *Tosefta* Yevamot, 14. 8: שׁוּב מַעֲשֵׂה בְּשִׁשִּׁים בְּנֵי אָדָם שִׁירְדוּ לְכַרְקוּם בֵּיתֵיר וְלֹא עָלָה מֵהֶם "שוב מעשה בששים בני אדם שירדו לכרקום ביתיר ולא עלה מהם" (ברקום) stems from the Latin *circumvallatio* (=דיק= dyke).

332 Oppenheimer, "Bar Kokhba Revolt," 67. Idem, "The Bethar War and the Bar Kokhba Revolt," *Maarachot* 267 (January 1979): 36–40 [in Hebrew]. The term *Karkum* is the Hebrew word for the Greek term *χαράκωμα* to indicate the fence of a Roman camp. Oppenheimer prefers this interpretation to the popular one that *Karkum* originates from the Roman term *Circumvallation*, which means a dyke. See also Yeivin, 120. He explained the source as a description of the attempt by the besieged to break the siege, and their descent to the Karkum in an effort to fight the Romans. See, on page 230, note 58, Yeivin notes that Alon opposed this interpretation. According to him, those were Jews who were brought for trial before the military commanders of the local army stationed there after the conquest of Bethar. Clermont-Ganneau argued that the inscription found near the spring in Bethar that mentions the legions v Macedonica and xi Claudia testifies to the presence of units of these legions stationed there as the garrison after the suppression of the revolt. See

supported by the system of strategic roads the Romans paved to prevent just such action and to separate areas held by the rebels from each other. A good example of such a road is the one between Bethlehem and Ziph, which was paved during the course of the revolt and separated rebels in the mountains from those rallied in the desert.³³³ Nevertheless, as discussed later, a considerable number of rebels managed to filter out between the Roman camps set up on the strategic roads and found refuge in hideout systems in southeastern Judaea and north of Jerusalem.

The above-mentioned sources that address the fate of Bethar emphasize the fact that Bethar was the focal point of events in southeastern Judaea in the final stages of revolt. This is further evidenced by the two types of findings associated with the Second Revolt: the Bar Kokhba coins and the letters that were discovered, mainly along the western shores of the Dead Sea.

The Archaeological Finds

The coin finds of the Second Revolt, especially those originating at sites at which regulated excavations or surveys were conducted, constitute possible evidence for the area under Bar Kokhba's control, the territorial extent of the revolt in general and in Judaea in particular. In 1984, Mildenberg published a book cataloguing a collection of silver and bronze coins of the Second Revolt, including coins originating from robber excavations that found their way into private collections and museums. Earlier, in 1977, he sketched a coin distribution map for the Second Revolt based on nine sites in which single coins and coin hoards derived from robber excavations associated with the revolt were found.³³⁴ In 1984, Dan Barag also sketched a map of the distribution of coins of the Bar Kokhba revolt, based upon the discovery of ten sites and the coin findings from excavations and surveys conducted until the beginning of the 1980s.³³⁵ The maps of Mildenberg and Barag indicate that the focal area of the Bar Kokhba coin distribution lay within

Charles Clermont-Ganneau, *Researches in Palestine*, during the years 1873–1874 (London: Published for the Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund, 1896–1899): 463–470.

- 333 Kokhavi, *Judea, Samaria and the Golan*, 26; See also Haim Ben David, "All the Roads Go to Jerusalem: The Road System to Jerusalem in the Roman and Byzantine Periods," in *New Studies in the Archeology of Jerusalem and Its Region, Collected Papers* 7 (2013): 208–217; For the site of the Israeli Milestone Committee, see <http://milestones.kinneret.ac.il>.
- 334 Mildenberg, "Bar Kokhba in Jerusalem," 65; idem, "Coins and Documents," 321–323, maps 2 and 3; idem, *Coins*, 53, map 1, 83, map 2. On the hoards, see idem, *Coins*, 49–57.
- 335 Dan Barag, "A Note on the Geographical Distribution of Bar Kokhba Coins," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 4 (1980): 30–33.

Judaea to the south of Jerusalem. For example, in areas such as Herodium,³³⁶ 'Ain-'Arrub,³³⁷ the Hebron mountains, like in Hebron, Idana, Dhahiriya, and el-Fawwar,³³⁸ and along the western shores of the Dead Sea, such as at Khirbet Qumran,³³⁹ the Murabba'at cave,³⁴⁰ the Cave of the Pool,³⁴¹ the Cave of Letters,³⁴² the Cave of Horror,³⁴³ and the Cave of the Miqveh in Naḥal Hardof.³⁴⁴

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- 336 On the hoards of Bar Kokhba coins from Herodium, see Augusto Spijkerman, *Herodion III Catalogo delle Monete*, (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press 1972), 23–83, 85–95. On the Second Revolt coins found in Corbo's dig at Herodium, see Spijkerman, *ibid.*, 19–21, nos. 59–67, 73–74, 82, 84, 102. For Bar Kokhba coins found in an underground system, see Roi Porat, Ehud Netzer, Yakov Kalman, Rachel Chachy, "Bar Kokhba Coins from Herodium (Hebrew University expedition)," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 17 (2009–2010): 98–105; Ehud Netzer, Roi Porat, Yakov Kalman, Rachel Chachy, "Herodium during the Two Jewish Revolts," *In the Highland's Depth*, Ephraim Range and Binyamin Research Studies 1 (2011): 59–68 [in Hebrew].
- 337 Yoram Tsafrir, "A Cave from the Time of the Bar-Kokhba Revolt near 'Ain-'Arrub," *Qadmoniot* 8 (1975): 24–27. The coin findings included a coin of Alexander Janeus, Agrippa I, the governors Valerius Gratus and Felix; eight coins of the years two and three of the Great Revolt; and three coins of years two and three of the Bar Kokhba Revolt. See also Yoram Tsafrir, Boaz Zissu, "A Hiding Complex of the Second Temple Period and the Time of the Bar-Kokhba Revolt at 'Ain-'Arrub in the Hebron Hills," in *The Roman and Byzantine Near East* 3 (2002): 6–36. See Mildenberg, "Coins and Documents," 320; Yaakov Meshorer, "A Coin Hoard of Bar-Kokhba's Time," *Israel Museum News* 4 (1985): 43–50; *idem*, *The Coinage of Aelia Capitolina* (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 1989), 19.
- 338 See also Kloner, Tepper, 336, note 15. Leopold Hamburger, "Die Silber Münzprägung während der letzten Aufstandes der israeliten gegen Rom," *Zeitschrift für Numismatik* 18 (1892): 242–244.
- 339 See Ronald de Vaux, *Archaeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973); *Revue Biblique* 61 (1954): 230–233; 63 (1956): 565–569.
- 340 *DJD* II, 44–47, no. 267. Eight Bar Kokhba coins were bought from Bedouins.
- 341 Nachman Avigad, "Expedition A," *Israel Exploration Journal* 12 (1962): 179, Pl. 20, 2 Bronze Coins, year three with the inscription: "To the Freedom of Jerusalem."
- 342 Yigael Yadin, "Expedition D," *Israel Exploration Journal* 11 (1961): 38. A bronze coin, year three of the revolt, with the inscription: *For the Freedom of Jerusalem*.
- 343 Yohanan Aharoni, "Expedition B," *Israel Exploration Journal* 12 (1962): 186–199; See Levi Y. Rahmani, "The Coins from the Cave of Horror," *Israel Exploration Journal* 12 (1962): 200. Three coins of year two of the revolt, with the inscription: *For the Freedom of Israel* and one coin dated to 134/135.
- 344 Levy Y. Rahmani, "The Coins from Nahal Seelim and Nahal Hardof," *Israel Exploration Journal* 11 (1961): 63–64, a bronze coin from the second year with the inscription *For the Freedom of Israel*.

In addition to the coin distribution maps published before the 1980s, the place names mentioned in the letters found in the Murabba'at cave and in the Cave of Letters,³⁴⁵ suggest the territorial extent of the area under Bar Kokhba's control during the Second Revolt had spread. These names included Herodium,³⁴⁶ Beth Mashko/Mashku,³⁴⁷ Tekoa,³⁴⁸ Qiryat 'Arabayyah,³⁴⁹ Kefar Baruch,³⁵⁰ Meẓad Ḥasidim,³⁵¹ 'Ein Gedi,³⁵² and Luḥit.³⁵³

Foerster restricted the area of the main battle in Judaea to the following geographic parameters: Jerusalem and Ramallah in the north; in the west, the watershed line running southwards from Bethar; and in the east, north-west of the Dead Sea.³⁵⁴ The evidence of the 1980s about the distribution area of coins of the revolt, the place where the letters were found, and the place names mentioned in the letters related to the Second Revolt—together with the archaeological evidence (like hideout systems and Bar Kokhba coins) found in some of the places (in Herodium and Qiryat Arabayyah [identified

345 The names of the sites are organized in geographical order. I included only the names from the letters dated between the years 132 and 136. I excluded the name *Arazin*. See Yadin, "Expedition D," *Israel Exploration Journal* 11 (1961): 48–49, who added the name. However in the final publication, *P. Yadin* 55, the name was omitted, and completed as: "ומתר אחרן" (= "and from *another place*"). See Kloner, Tepper, 371, note 28. I included just the names of sites from the letters dated 132–135. For other sites in the documents in the Judaeen Desert, see Sar-Avi, *Toponymes*.

346 *DJD* 11, no. 24, A–F, I–J H, Herodium = *Herodion* in the letters is named *Herodis*. See Sar-Avi, *Toponymes*, 26–30.

347 *DJD* 11, no. 42, L. 1.4, Schäfer, 126, following Milik, locates Beth Mashko near to Herodium, Sar-Avi, *Toponymie*, 43–46.

348 *DJD* 11, no. 47, L. 6; *P. Yadin* 54, l. 10; *P. Yadin* 55, l. 3; *P. Yadin* 61, l. 1 Sar-Avi, *Toponymie*, 34–37.

349 *P. Yadin* 57, l. 1 *P. Yadin* 58, l. 4; For the identification, see *P. Yadin* 57, 322–323. See also Sar-Avi, *Toponymie*, 34–37.

350 *DJD* 11, no. 43, L. 6. On the different readings of 'אנשי הכרך', see above, xxxx. *Tabula Imperii Romani, Iudaea Palestina*, entry: Caphar Baricha, located 5 km east of Hebron. Sar-Avi, *Toponymie*, 30–34 identified it with Kh. Bureikut.

351 *DJD* 11, no. 45, L. 6. See Schäfer, 122. Despite the difficulty in linking the Hasidim with the Essenes, Schäfer agreed with Milik's identification of the site as Khirbet Qumran. See also Avi Yonah, *Gazetteer*, 80, entry: Meẓad Ḥasidim.

352 *DJD* 11, no. 44, 45, 46; *P. Yadin* 44, l. 2, 4, 6–7; *P. Yadin* 45, l. 3.5, 20; *P. Yadin* 46, l. 1, 7; *P. Yadin* 47, l. 4; *P. Yadin* 49, l. 1; *P. Yadin* 51, l. 1; *Xhev/Se* 13 l. 5 *Xhev/Se* 67 l. 1–2. Sar-Avi, *Toponymie*, 70–82.

353 *P. Yadin* 44, l. 5; identified Luhit in the region of Zoar, in the southeastern part of the Dead Sea. See Avi Yonah, *Gazetteer* 75, entry: Luḥit; Sar-Avi, *Toponymie*, 106–110.

354 Foerster (above, 146, note 2).

with 'Ein Harub]) mentioned in the letters³⁵⁵—provides the basis for adopting Foerster's conjecture.

But at least two place names in the letters lie beyond the area within which Foerster claimed the Second Revolt spread. The references are to the city of Naḥash identified with Dir Naḥas, which lies two and a half kilometers to the east-northeast of Beit Guvrin,³⁵⁶ and to Rimon, for which two suggested identifications exist, both outside the area delineated by Foerster. The first identification is with Khirbet Umm er-Ramamin in the Judean plain,³⁵⁷ and the second one is with Rimmon, northeast of Bethlehem.³⁵⁸

Barag and Mildenberg, in their review of the Second Revolt coin distribution, also indicated two places in which coins of the revolt were found, as was other evidence for the activities of the Bar Kokhba fighters that extend beyond the borderlines that Foerster hypothesized. Both of these places are north of Jerusalem. The first one is in the east, in one of the caves of Wadi Daliyeh called 'Araq En-Na'saneh, in which a bronze coin of the Second Revolt was found,³⁵⁹ as was a hoard comprising 17 silver coins from the period of Trajan and Hadrian.³⁶⁰ The other one is in the west, in Khirbet El-'Aqd, where hideout systems were

355 For evidence for a subterranean complex in Herodium dated to the Bar Kokhba revolt, see Ehud Netzer, *Herodium*, (Jerusalem: Hots'at Ari'el, 1980): 43–44. See above, note 22.

356 See *DJD* II, no. 24 A, l. 7; B. l. 8; C l. 7, 8; E, l. 6–7; F, l. 6. Milik identified *Ir Nahahs* with *Dir Naḥas*, 2.5 km east-northeast of Beit-Guvrin. See Avi Yonah, *Gazeteer*, p. 66, entry: *Ir Nahahs*. Against this identification, see Zeev Safrai, "Administrative Structure of Judaea in the Roman Period," in *Studies in the History of the Jewish People and the Land of Israel* 4 (1988), 112 [in Hebrew]. He identifies Kefar Naḥahs with Horvat Naḥahs, close to Solomon's Pools, although in note 36 he adds that it is hard to determine. See also Sar-Avi, *Toponymy*, 23–25.

357 *DJD*, II, no. 28; Kh. Umn Rumanim. Southern Judean Plain, south of Beersheba. See *Tabula Imperii Romani, Iudaea Palestina*, 122, entry: 'En Rimmon.

358 Rimmon, northeast of Bethlehem, see *Tabula Imperii Romani, Iudaea Palestina*, 215 entry: Rimmon I. See above, 157–158.

359 Paul, W. Lapp, Nancy L. Lapp, *Discoveries in the Wadi ed Daliyeh* (Cambridge, Mass.: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1974), 102, PL. 37.9, 101 A. The date of the coin is not readable. See also Mildenberg, 50 note 117. See also Hanan Eshel, "The Finds from the Cave of 'Araq En-Na'saneh in Wadi Daliyeh," *Refuge Caves*, I, 71–76 [in Hebrew].

360 See Emanuel Damati and Zeev Erlich, "A Hoard of Denarii and a Tridrachm from Wadi ed-Daliyeh," *Israel Numismatic Journal*, 5 (1981): 33–37. For an extended version, see "A Hoard of Silver Coins from the 'Araq En-Na'saneh Cave," *Refuge Caves*, I, 77–82. See also Y. Peleg, "Region I: Survey and Excavations of Caves along Wadi el-Makkuk and Wadi ed-Daliya," *Atiqot* 41 (2002): 1–4.

discovered dating to the period of the Bar Kokhba revolt and where more than 15 coins of the Second Revolt were found.³⁶¹

2.1.5.1 Hideout Complexes

Ever since the publication of the articles by Mildenberg and Barag, new evidence has accumulated about the coins of the revolt found outside the areas of coin findings that they presented in their surveys. These updates were based mainly on the findings made in hideouts and in refuge systems that were linked with the course of the Bar Kokhba revolt. During the past thirty years, a tremendous upsurge began in the research of hideout and refuge complexes within the area of Judaea. Various attempts based on these findings were made to broaden the territory claimed to have been under the control of Bar Kokhba and the area of the Second Revolt to the entire region of Judaea.

"In the plains of Judaea there are thousands of caves and well-holes, and this is the richest area in Palestine in man-made quarries." This had been known since 1898–1900, when Macalister surveyed the plains of Judaea on behalf of the Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF). He was the first to attribute the use of the caves for refuge purposes in addition to their other uses. But he did not date them and did not link them with the period of the Second Revolt.³⁶²

The discovery of underground hideouts in the mountains of Judaea was defined as a system of hideouts that spurred renewed interest in the subterranean complexes in the plains of Judaea:

1. In 1968, Meshorer excavated in a cave complex in Ain Arroub, north of the Al-Arroub refugee camp near the highway between Jerusalem and Hebron. In view of the findings there, he dated the cave complex to the period of the Second Revolt.³⁶³ Following looting activity in the cave, Yoram Tsafir conducted a salvage excavation. In 1975, he published a short article titled "A Cave from the Time of the Bar Kokhba Revolt Near 'Ain-'Arrub." In his opinion, "the use of the cave can be attributed to the

361 On the hideout complex at Khirbet el Aqd, see Mordechai Gichon, "Military Aspects of the Bar Kokhba Revolt and Subterranean Hideaways," *Cathedra* 26 (1983): 30–42 [in Hebrew]. On the numismatic findings, see page 36, note 25. See also Emanuel Damati, "Four Bar Kokhba Coins from Khirbet el Aqd," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 4 (1980): 27–29. Arie Kindler, "A Mobile Mint of Bar-Kokhva," in *The Bar-Kokhva Revolt: A New Approach*, 172–181.

362 See Kloner, Tepper, 30; Frederick J. Bliss, Stewart R.A. Macalister, *Excavations in Palestine during the Years 1898–1900* (London: Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund, 1902), 269–270.

363 Yaakov Meshorer, "'Ain-'Arrub," *Hadashot Arkheologyot* 27 (1968): 19–20 [in Hebrew].

Bar Kokhba revolt both on the basis of the coins (a total of three coins from year two and year three of the revolt) and fragments of decorated candlesticks, and in view of the fact that there was no renewed habitation in the cave until the Middle Ages. It is known from the sources that Jewish settlement in the mountains of Judaea north of Hebron was almost entirely eliminated after the Bar Kokhba revolt.”³⁶⁴ Tsafrir was the first to determine that the cave was especially adapted by the Jews to serve as a storage and hiding place in preparation for the Bar Kokhba revolt and, more importantly, to link the cave to the words of Dio Cassius, who testified that the Jews, in connection with the Second Revolt, had prepared hideaways in various settlements: “To be sure, they did not dare try conclusions with the Romans in the open field, but they occupied the advantageous positions in the country and strengthened them with mines, hideaways and walls, in order that they might have places of refuge whenever they should be hard pressed, and might meet together unobserved under ground; and they pierced these subterranean passages from above at intervals to let in air and light.”³⁶⁵

2. During the years 1973–1975, Ehud Netzer and Shimon Arazi conducted a survey and excavations in Herodium in which they discovered subterranean tunnels that were hundreds of meters long. The width of the tunnels was about 1–1.40 m and their average height was 1.80 m, which made it possible to walk through them easily. Despite the small finds material, they attributed the tunnels to the period of the Bar Kokhba revolt, believing them to have been intended for operative needs as part of the military system used for defense and attack.³⁶⁶
3. In 1979, in Khirbet Gudur in the Hebron hills, southwest of Gush Etzion, two hideout complexes were exposed. The finds there, which included a few pottery shards, were limited. But in accordance with them, this site was also dated to the period of the Second Revolt.³⁶⁷ In 1978, the caves in

364 Yoram Tsafrir, “A Cave from the Time of the Bar-Kokhba Revolt near ‘Ain-‘Arrub,” *Qadmoniot* 8 (1975): 24–27 [in Hebrew]. For a later detailed study of the site, see Yoram Tsafrir, Boaz Zissu, “A Hiding Complex of the Second Temple Period and the Time of the Bar-Kokhba Revolt at ‘Ain-‘Arrub in the Hebron Hills,” in *The Roman and Byzantine Near East*, ed. John H. Humphrey, vol. 3 (Portsmouth, R.I.: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 2002), 6–36.

365 Dio Cassius, 69: 12: 1; translation Isaac, “Bar Kokhba Revolt,” 12.

366 Ehud Netzer, Shimeon Arazi, “Tunnels in Herodium,” *Qadmoniot*, 69–70 (1985): 33–38 [in Hebrew]. Oppenheimer, “Hideouts,” 256.

367 Michael Even Esh, “Hiding Complex 2,” *Nikrot Zurim* 13 (1986): 96–98 [in Hebrew]. See also Kloner, Tepper, 267–270.

the plains of Judaea were defined for the first time by David Alon, a supervisor of the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums, as hideout complexes. And from that year, an increasing momentum began in the research of caves in the Judaeian plains. This research group was headed by Kloner, who adopted the definition and coined the term hideout complexes to describe the caves. In the conference held in the Yad Ben-Zvi Institute in 1982 on the subject of "Subterranean Hideaways in the Judean Foothills and the Bar Kokhba Revolt," Kloner delivered the main lecture on the hideout complexes and opened the discussion on the phenomenon of the hideout in general and the hideout complexes in the Judaeian plains in particular. He linked the complexes in the Judaeian plains with those of the Hebron hills on the basis of the similarity of their shape and regarded them as a well-defined and unique phenomenon that expressed the military approach of the revolt leadership, who had designed the structure of the complexes. He used the location and distribution of these hideout complexes, i.e., the preparation of the Judaeian plains for revolt and for large-scale and intensive warfare, as a basis for his deduction of how the leadership must have perceived of the revolt and the war.

Kloner noted that "a number of scholars have already noticed the link between the phenomenon of subterranean complexes and the main sources that tell the story of the Bar Kokhba war. The phenomenon accords entirely with the testimony of Dio Cassius which constitutes solid support for dating the main usage of the complexes to the period of the Bar Kokhba war." Kloner thought, in view of what Dio Cassius said, that the hideout complexes were part of the strategy in the military struggle against the Romans. In this lecture, even though he noted that research on the hideout complexes in the Judaeian plains was still far from its conclusion, he detailed the characteristics and typology of the complexes and deduced that the area of the Shephela in Judaea was completely subject to the rule of Bar Kokhba. The discovery of so many hideout complexes provides evidence for the existence of fairly close-packed settlements in which the inhabitants participated in the revolt.³⁶⁸

368 Discussion: Amos Kloner, "Subterranean Hideaways from the Time of Bar Kokhba Revolt," *Cathedra* 26 (1982): 4–23 [in Hebrew]. See also idem, "Subterranean Hideaways of the Judaeian Foothills and the Bar-Kokhba Revolt," *The Jerusalem Cathedra*, 3 (1983): 114–135; idem, "Underground Hiding Complexes from the Bar Kokhba War in Judaeian Shephela," *Biblical Archaeologist*, 46 (1983): 210–221; idem, "Hideout—Complexes from the Period of Bar Kokhba in the Darom (South), Cave 20 in Hurvat Nidrash," in *Bar Kokhva Revolt: A New Approach*, 153–171 [in Hebrew].

Other discussants at the conference: Oppenheimer,³⁶⁹ Gichon,³⁷⁰ and Yadin.³⁷¹ Each of them criticized some of Kloner's claims and conclusions. All three scholars mainly debated whether it was possible to attribute some of the hideout complexes to periods before that of the Bar Kokhba war. Oppenheimer claimed that the short period of time that had passed between the Great Revolt and the Second Revolt and the events that occurred between them made it difficult to date the hideout complexes to a single defined event. Moreover, he thought that "it is more reasonable to suppose that fighting from caves in general, and from the subterranean hideouts of the Judaeans Shephelah in particular, was generally typical of the rebel movement against Rome." In his view, warfare of this kind had already begun in the Herodian period.³⁷² Yet he qualified this by saying, "However, if we insist on distinguishing, it is more likely that the subterranean hideouts are linked to the Bar Kokhba revolt." In his opinion, everyone or their forbears who had suffered the horrors of the Great Revolt would invest much effort in the organization and preparation for another revolt, including the excavation of hideout complexes that could serve as places of refuge in times of trouble.³⁷³

Mordechai Gichon, who led the excavations in Khirbet al-Aked, based his criticism in the discussion on the military aspect of the Second Revolt. He linked the complexes to the Second Revolt; but in his opinion, a distinction should be made regarding their purpose, i.e., whether they were intended for attacking the regular Roman army or as shelters against invaders from the desert whose aim was robbery and pillage. He thought, at least with regard to Khirbet al-Aked, that they served a double purpose both as a subterranean hiding place and a base for attacks.³⁷⁴ We do not yet have the archaeological means of determining in all cases when these complexes were hewn; the matter requires further study and research. Some of them may have been cleaved as early as the Hasmonean revolt or the first revolt.

369 Oppenheimer, "Hideouts," 256–262.

370 Mordechai Gichon, "Military Aspects of the Bar Kokhba Revolt and the Subterranean Hideaways," *Cathedra* 26 (1982): 30–42; See also idem, "New Insight into the Bar Kokhba War and a Reappraisal of Dio Cassius 69.12–13," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 77 (1986): 15–43; idem, "Bar Kokhba's Estimate of His Chances on the Eve of His Revolt against Rome," *Revue des Études Militaires Anciennes* 2 (2005): 113–132.

371 Yigael Yadin, "Comments on the Role of Hideaways in Bar Kokhba Strategy, and Some Notes on the Documents of Bar Kokhba," *Cathedra* 26 (1982): 43–45.

372 For the events in Herod's time, see *AJ*, xv, 342–348; *BJ*, I, 398–400.

373 See Oppenheimer, English translation, 12.

374 Gichon, (above, note 370), the Hebrew version, 42.

This was the main criticism of Yadin concerning the dating of the hideout complexes. He also raised the question of the connection between the hideout complexes and the refuge seekers and the dating of actions relevant to the hideouts. When were these hideouts appropriated, when were they planned and excavated, and at what stage of the revolt were they used? The comments of Yadin have been repeatedly quoted in a number of studies, such as the one by Gideon Foerster that disconnected the complexes from the Bar Kokhba revolt,³⁷⁵ and others that—despite methodological difficulties—link the hideouts to the Second Revolt.³⁷⁶ Gideon Foerster, in a separate reaction to the discussion, added a question mark to the title of his article “Hideout Complexes—from the Days of Bar Kokhba.” Josephus and Dio Cassius used the same term, *υπονομος* to describe the subterranean burrows and tunnels. Therefore, in Foerster’s opinion, the study of the hideout complexes should be based on the descriptions that Josephus made of the tunnels and burrows during the Great Revolt.

On the distribution map of the hideout complexes and in the annotations to it, Kloner and Tepper indicated that more than 280 complexes and about 100 settlement sites were found in the Judaean plains during the archaeological surveys conducted between 1978 and the end of 1986.³⁷⁷ In a discussion of these complexes, Kloner reviewed the subjects he had dealt with at the aforementioned conference; in his opinion, the great amount of uniformity and resemblance among many of the complexes indicated that these complexes were a well-defined and unique phenomenon. They were installed in the same period and built within a brief space of time to be used during the course of the Second Revolt. As stated earlier, the entire phenomenon corresponds with the testimony of Dio Cassius, which serves as a firm point of reference for dating the main usage of these complexes to the period of the Bar Kokhba war.³⁷⁸

From the location and distribution of the hideout complexes, Kloner deduced that “the Bar Kokhba war and also the rule of Shimon ben Kosiba extended throughout the land of Judaea: the mountain, the plains and the Judaean Desert in the area south and east of Jerusalem, and as far as the Beersheba valley in the south. From the lowlands of the plains in the west to

375 Gideon Foerster, “Do the Subterranean Hideaways Date from the Period of Bar Kokhba,” *Cathedra* 28 (1983): 155–157 [in Hebrew].

376 See Zissu diss., (above, note 27), 271; Kloner, Zissu, Hebrew version, 130 English translation, 186; Yehiel Zelinger, *The Rural Settlements in the Shephela of Lod (Lydda) during the Second Temple Period*, Ph.D. Diss. (Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University, 2009).

377 For the map and a list of the caves, see Kloner, Tepper, 76–79.

378 Kloner, Tepper, 361.

the Dead Sea in the east." The entire area was made ready for the revolt and the complexes were the basic foundation for a powerful and large-scale rebellion.³⁷⁹

On the map, there also appear two settlements outside the above borderlines. The most northern settlement was Khirbet Kureikur on the banks of Nahal Modi'in near the main Roman road from the heights of Beit Horon in the direction of the coastal cities. This was the place at which two hideout complexes were discovered. Nothing was found in them from which to calculate the date they were installed;³⁸⁰ however, they were similar in shape to the other complexes. The most northern site on the map at which both hideout complexes and coins were found is Khirbet al-Aked,³⁸¹ leading Kloner and Tepper to assume that the area to the north of Jerusalem did not take an active part in the Bar Kokhba revolt and was not under the control of Bar Kokhba's leadership.³⁸²

The southernmost site on the map is the Nahal Yatir Site, at which hideout complexes and a fortress were found and 31 coins, including three Bar Kokhba coins, were unearthed: a dinar of year two and a small bronze coin and a medium-sized coin of the undated series *For the Freedom of Jerusalem*.³⁸³ According to David Alon, this was one of the fifty fortresses mentioned by Dio Cassius.³⁸⁴

Applebaum adopted the dating of the hideout complexes to the period of the Second Revolt and claimed that they constitute evidence of a "Jewish enclave" that took active part in the Bar Kokhba revolt.³⁸⁵ He found further evidence for the spread of the revolt in the area of the Judaeian plains in the rich find in the complexes of clay lamps of the late Herodian period decorated with the Menorah symbol and dated to the years between the two revolts. In his view, the Menorah model represents the propaganda of the Jewish rebels in that area.³⁸⁶

379 Kloner, "Hideaways," 22–23.

380 Shahar Tepper, "Khirbet Kureikur," Kloner, Tepper, 128–130.

381 Kloner, "Coins in the Hiding Complexes," Kloner, Tepper, 333–337.

382 Kloner, Tepper, 370–371. See also Yitzhak Magen et al., *Archaeological Survey of the Hill Country of Benjamin* (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 1993), xx. There is no evidence for a rebellion in the hill country of Benjamin during the Bar Kokhba revolt. The Benjamites did not participate in the revolt.

383 Yuval Goren, Peter Fabian, "Coinage in the Period of the Bar Kochba Revolt in View of Findings in the Tunnel Sites in the Yatir Area," *Niqrot Zurim* 7 (1983): 60–66. The coinage includes some coins of the Great Revolt.

384 David Alon, "Nahal Yatir Site," Kloner, Tepper, 154–159.

385 Applebaum, "Results," 240.

386 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 52.

Even before the hideout complexes in the Judean plains were discovered, Yeivin believed that the area was one of the important focal points of the revolt centered around the area of Beit Guvrin in three settlements: Kefar Bish, Kefar Shiḥlaim, and Kefar Dikhraya.³⁸⁷ These three were fortified by the rebels in order to block the Romans from the access roads leading from the Judean plains into the Judean mountains and Jerusalem.³⁸⁸ All three settlements are mentioned in the legends about the destruction of Jerusalem:

TJ, Ta'aniot, 4 69a

Three villages were there; each of them used to produce twice as many as the Exodus from Egypt. Kefar Bish, Kefar Shiḥlaia [In TB and Lamentation Rabba-Kefar Shiḥlaim] Kefar Dikhraya [in Lamentation Rabba-Kefar



FIGURE 2.10 *Tunnel Breaching Wall of Columbarium, Horvat Tabaq.*
PHOTO BY BOAZ ZISSU.

³⁸⁷ For the identification of the three settlements, see *Tabula Imperii Romani, Iudaea Palestina*, 97 entry: Capharabis for Kefar Bish; for Kefar Shiḥlaim, 218, entry: Saalim, Saalis; and for Kefar Dikhria, 72, entry: Kefar Dikhraia.

³⁸⁸ Yeivin, 102–103.



FIGURE 2.11 *Typical Tunnel at Horvat Tabaq.*
PHOTO BY BOAZ ZISSU.

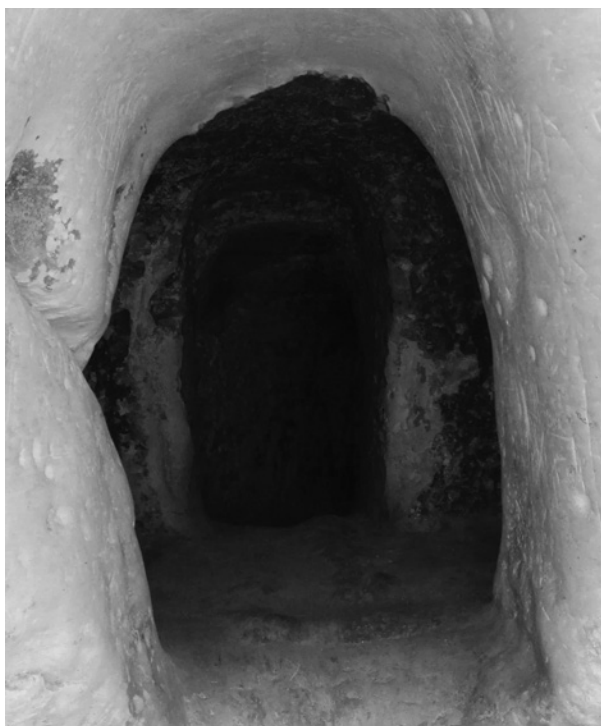


FIGURE 2.12 *Hideouts from Tel Goded.*
PHOTO BY TAMAR HAYARDENI.

Dichrin]. Why is it called Kefar Bish? Because they did not welcome wayfarers. And why is it called Kefar Shihlaim? Because they multiply like watercress. Why is it called Kefar Dikhraya? Because the women bear only males. And if one of them did not leave, she would not never bear a female.³⁸⁹

Although all three settlements are mentioned together in the source, one should not infer from it that they were destroyed during the Bar Kokhba revolt. The attempt by Yeivin to date their destruction to the period of the Second Revolt is based on the summary of some of the legends of the destruction of Jerusalem in the version of the Babylonian Talmud: "Said Abaye to R. Joseph: 'Since they were so virtuous, why were they punished?'—He replied: 'Because they did not mourn for Jerusalem, as it is written; Rejoice ye with Jerusalem and be glad for her, all ye that love her, rejoice for joy with her all ye that mourn over her.'" (Isa. 66:10).³⁹⁰

Yeivin linked this tradition with the reason for the destruction of these settlements, for not having mourned for the destruction of Jerusalem. And this reason could only have been possible after the Great Revolt. However, Yeivin himself noted that the generalization about their punishment came after the three acts for the righteousness of Israel. In my opinion, there is no connection between the generalization about the reason for the punishment of Israel and the destruction of the three settlements. Although Kefar Bish was conquered by Cerealis during the Great Revolt,³⁹¹ At this point, there is the use of a recurring motif in the legends about the destruction of Jerusalem that explains the destruction of various settlements by their failure to mourn for it.³⁹² Moreover, wherever necessary, those same legends describe in detail the reasons for the destruction of Kabul, Shihin, and Migdal Sebayya without the need for generalizations.³⁹³

389 שלושה כפרים כל אחד ואחד מוציא כפליים כיוצאי מצרים. כפר ביש, וכפר שיחלייא [במק- בילות בבבלי ובאיכה רבה—כפר שיחליים] וכפר דיכרייא [במקבילה באיכה רבה כפר דיכ- רין] ולמה הוא קרי לון כפר ביש? דלא הוון מקבלין לעבורא. ולמה הוא קרי לון כפר שיחלייא? דהוון מרבין ביניהון כאילין תחלוסייא. ולמה הוא קרי לון כפר דיכרייא? דהוון כל נשיהון ילדן דיכרין. אי להות חדא מינהון נפקא מן תמן לא הוות ילדה נקבה" ירושלמי, תענית ד,

For parallel versions, See *TB*, Gittin, 57a; *Lamentation Rabba*, 2:19.

390 "אמר לו אביי רב יוסף מאחר דהוון צדיקים כולי האי מאי טעמא איענוש?" *TB*, Gittin 57a: "א"ל: משום שלא" "התאבלו על ירושלים דכתיב 'שמחו את ירושלים וגילו בה כל אוהביה, שישו אתה משוש כל המתאבלים עליה."

391 *JW*, 4, 554.

392 Schäfer, 187–188.

393 See above, 158–160.

In view of the above, it appears that the detailed description Yeivin gave of the traffic routes over which these settlements had strategic control does not contribute to the discussion because there is no evidence that the rebels fortified them and that the Romans were forced to conquer them in order to clear the way into the mountains of Judaea. What Yeivin said about conspicuous fortifications by the rebels in this region at strategic key points of control over traffic routes to Jerusalem and the Judaeian mountains contradicts—to some extent—the information that has accumulated about the hideout complexes, especially with regard to two issues: First, Kloner noted that the complexes were installed in villages and towns scattered throughout the Judaeian plains and not specifically along the main traffic routes,³⁹⁴ which is contrary to what Yeivin said about fortifications along the main highways. Second, Yeivin refers to overt fortifications, which contradicts the idea of covert hideout complexes. Kloner did mention that “parallel to or at a stage a little later certain ‘convenient places’ were fortified, in accordance with the words of Dio Cassius about conspicuous fortifications” and referred in this connection to Gichon’s study on Khirbet al-Aked.³⁹⁵ Yet Gichon himself claimed that the hideout complexes in the Judaeian plains—unlike the one in Khirbet al-Aked that served both for purposes of attack and for hiding—were underground refuge settlements that served only as shelter and hideouts for the inhabitants of the settlements nearby or directly above them.³⁹⁶

This distinction between the hideout complex in Khirbet al-Aked and those in the Judaeian plains is not valid; I prefer the claim that the complexes served only for hiding purposes.³⁹⁷ But in accordance with the structure of the hideout complexes and the finds made in them, it is difficult to accept the conclusions of Kloner that they were excavated during the stages of preparation for the Second Revolt. All the scholars who linked the hideout complexes to the Second Revolt found it necessary to refer to the words of Dio Cassius. Yet according to what he said, the tunnels were not excavated in preparation for the revolt but only during the revolt itself.³⁹⁸

Since the publication of the Kloner-Tepper book, in which the northernmost hideout complex was identified as Khirbet al-Aked, the search for hideout complexes continued with great intensity; and in the course of about 15 years,

394 Kloner, “Hideouts,” 23; Kloner, Tepper, 374.

395 Kloner, “Hideouts,” 22–23 and note 23.

396 Gichon (above, note 361), 41.

397 Aviam, (above, note 109), 58. See Negev, (above, note 109), 21–32, for his criticism on the use of the hideouts.

398 Oppenheimer, “Hideouts,” 256.

many complexes were exposed, and many attempts were made in research to extend the range of these complexes further north in order to include in the territory of the Second Revolt the northern areas of Judaea (such as the western part of the Benjamin mountains; the plains of Lod; the desert of Samaria; the northern part of the Judaeian Desert; the mountains of Jerusalem; the regions of *Lydda* (Lod), Timna, Gophna, and Aqraba; and as far as the borders of the Samaritan settlements).

At a Bar-Ilan University conference in 2001, Kloner and Zissu tried to mark the northern border of the territory under the control of Bar Kokhba, mainly north of the Judaeian plains in the region of the Lod lowlands in the area between Khirbet al-Aked in the south and Shoham in the north.³⁹⁹ In a short article with a map that they had published previously, they noted some caves located north of Khirbet Kureikur, which are the northernmost caves, being in the region of the Modi'in Industrial district.⁴⁰⁰ At the same conference, Shlomit Veksler-Bedolah presented finds from a hideout complex near the Yad Benjamin site to the west of the Judaeian plains. This complex resembled others that were previously researched in that region. However its importance and contribution is that it was dug during an orderly archaeological excavation and the finds made in it were discovered *in situ*, which means that they had remained undisturbed in later years by archaeological robbers. Four coins were found there, including a Roman coin from the end of the third century; but no Bar Kokhba coins were discovered, even though she dated the complex to the period of the Bar Kokhba revolt. She did so on the basis of the round Roman candlestick and clay, glass, and metal vessels that were found on the floor of the complex that resembled the finds in other hideout complexes.⁴⁰¹

In that same year, Zissu, in his doctoral thesis, linked together a group of Jewish village settlements in the mountains and plains of Judaea, including new hideout complexes in them that he added to an updated map showing 320

399 Amos Kloner, Boaz Zissu, "Hiding Complexes in the Lydda Area and the Northern Border of the Bar Kokhba Administration," in *New Studies on the Bar Kokhba Revolt*, 73–85. Amos Kloner, Boaz Zissu, "Hiding Complexes in the Northern Judaeian Shephelah and the Northern Boundary of the Bar Kokhba Administration," in *One Land—Many Cultures: Archaeological Studies in Honour of Stanislao Loffreda OFM*, eds. G. Claudio Bottini, Leah Di Segni, L. Daniel Chrupcala (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 2003), 261–268.

400 See *ibid.*, the map on page 74. Only in 3 sites, Titura El Burj/Kulat et Tantura, er Ras el Midyeh, and the Modi'in Industry district, were Bar Kokhba coins found. And in the Shoham bypass road (Road 444), southern-type candles were found that were characteristic of the Second Revolt.

401 Shulamit Veksler-Bedolah, "Yad Benjamin A Hiding-Complex Site in the Western Judaeian Foothills," in *New Studies on the Bar Kokhba Revolt*, 41–51.

complexes discovered in 125 settlement sites in the Judean plains. These complexes had existed at the end of the Second Temple period and during the time of the Bar Kokhba revolt in a geographical expanse that extended between the area of Nahal Shiloh in the north and Nahal Shiqma in the south and between the north-south valley (called *the Telem valley*) in the east and the slopes of the Shephelah in the west.⁴⁰² Chapter 4 of his thesis, “The Period from 73 to 132 CE and the Bar Kokhba Revolt from an Archaeological Perspective,” constitutes the basis for the conclusive detailed 2003 article in English by Kloner and Zissu,⁴⁰³ which was published again in Hebrew in 2006.⁴⁰⁴ In these articles, all the various interpretations previously given to the hideout complexes entirely disappeared and were replaced by a typology of the hideout complexes containing 12 types for the approximately 320 complexes in 140 settlement sites in the Judean plains that had been found by the year 2003.

Kloner and Zissu surveyed hideout complexes that ranged beyond those already exposed, mainly in the Judean plains, and extended the geographical scope of the complexes to new regions:

1. The northern regions of Judaea in the West Benjamin area, that is the area of the Lod lowlands up to the environs of Antipatris in the north
2. East Benjamin south and the Ephraim mountains, i.e. the area north of Jerusalem. The northernmost complex was exposed in Tel Shiloh and in Khirbet Jib’it
3. Northern Hebron hills
4. Southern Hebron hills

They claimed that the phenomenon of hideout complexes was in usage by the inhabitants of Jewish villages that had existed in Judaea at the end of the Second Temple period but reached a height of perfection in the interim between the two revolts and during the period of the Bar Kokhba revolt. In their view, hideout complexes found throughout the territory of Judaea are

402 Boaz Zissu, *Rural Settlement in the Judean Hills and Foothills from the Late Second Temple Period to the Bar Kokhba Revolt*, Ph.D Diss. (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 2001). See 191, 271–301 and the map, Appendix 5.

403 Amos Kloner, Boaz Zissu, “Hiding Complexes in Judaea: An Archaeological and Geographical Update on the Area of the Bar Kokhba Revolt,” in *Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered*, 181–216. For the list of hiding complexes in Judaea and a map of their distribution, see page 216.

404 Republished in Hebrew: Amos Kloner, Boaz Zissu, “Hiding Complexes in Judaea: An Archaeological and Geographical Update on the Area of the Bar Kokhba Revolt,” in *For Uriel*, 125–147. For the list and map, see pages 136–137.

outstanding archaeological evidence, similar to the finds of Bar Kokhba coins for the widespread extent of control and administration of Bar Kosiba. Also, the updated map of the hideout complexes overlapped the map of Jewish settlement in Judaea and the distribution map of the coins minted during the Bar Kokhba war.⁴⁰⁵

Kloner and Zissu determined the borders of the Jewish settlement to include the areas extending from the region of Antipatris in the northwest, then eastward through Nahal Shiloh until the toparchy of 'Aqraba and the Alexandrion fortress. From there, their borders moved southward through the Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea to the region of Arad and 'Aro'er as far as the valley of Beersheba, then westward until the junction between the Judaeian plains and the coastal strip. In their opinion, this was the region under the Bar Kokhba administration that assumed an active role in the Bar Kokhba revolt and the region that was destroyed during the suppression of the revolt.⁴⁰⁶ Also, this confirmed, in their view, the words of Dio Cassius: "all Judaea had been stirred up." Because no hideout complexes had been found so far at non-Jewish settlement sites, the hideout complexes had become one of the identification marks for a Jewish settlement. Therefore, in their view, the absence of hideout complexes in Samaria strengthened the opinion that the Samaritans did not take part in the war against the Romans.

In 2009, Yehiel Zelinger wrote his doctoral thesis under the supervision of Kloner on the subject of the rural settlements in the plains of Lod during the Second Temple period.⁴⁰⁷ This research presented a comprehensive picture of the distribution of village settlements around the city of Lod during the late Hellenistic and Early Roman periods and until the end of the Bar Kokhba revolt. Note that Zelinger detailed the complexes exposed in the excavations in the plains of Lod in order to strengthen his historical conclusions about the area under the control of Bar Kokhba in the region: Burnat (north), Kh. Burnat (southwest), Shoham (Hill 10), Shoham bypass, Shoham, Khirbat Beit Kufa (Site 77), Kh. Harmush, Ben Shemen Junction, Kh. Beit 'Annabeh Mekorot pipeline, El Khirba Ramla, Nesher quarry, and Kh. Umm el-Umdan.⁴⁰⁸ Although aware of the difficulties in dating the hideout complexes, he referred back to the evidence of Dio Cassius and also to the conclusions of Kloner, who claimed

405 Kloner, Zissu, 195–196. This is an equivocal statement! Actually, most of the discussed coins originated from the hideouts. Therefore the overlap between the two is obvious, as will be discussed below.

406 Kloner, Zissu, 199.

407 Zelinger, (above, note 376).

408 Zelinger, 117.

that the mounting evidence from excavations in recent years indicated that during the period between the two revolts, the phenomenon reached its height of perfection and distribution. In Zelinger's opinion, there is a high degree of certainty that the hideout complexes found in most of the sites in the plains of Lod were in use during the period of the Bar Kokhba revolt.

The hideout complexes are important cultural-ethnic characteristics that allow for estimating the extent of the area of Bar Kokhba's administration. The many complexes found in some of the excavated settlements testify that they were prepared for the revolt. However, even at sites in which complexes were not dug, there were other finds (such as coins) that enable us to determine that the area was under the control of Shimon bar Kokhba. The two settlements in which no hideout complexes were found are apparently the exception, which means that preparations were made in most of the settlements for the anticipated revolt.⁴⁰⁹

In an article focused on one site in the Lod plains—the Ben Shemen junction—Zelinger and Esther Eshel strengthened the claim that the hideout complexes should be included among characteristic identifiers of Jewish settlements in the Early Roman period.⁴¹⁰ In the Ben Shemen excavation, complexes were exposed that were especially dug for hiding purposes. Additionally, various subterranean installations were originally for daily use, which were later converted for use as hideout complexes during the Bar Kokhba revolt. In their view, “secondary usages for hiding purposes in quarried installations . . . indicate the rapid preparation of the inhabitants for the Bar Kokhba revolt.”⁴¹¹ Findings at the Ben Shemen excavation consisted of storage jars, cauldrons, cooking pots, frying pans, and bottles. The location of most of the pottery finds in the mikveh indicated that the lives of the local people were transferred for a short while to the hideout complexes that were no longer in use during the Bar Kokhba revolt.

The coin findings were particularly disappointing and proved how difficult it is to arrive at historical conclusions about the complexes. Only 12 coins were found at the site, 10 of them were late coins that are unrelated to our subject. Only two coins were of the Early Roman period, one coin of year two of the Great Revolt (67/68 CE), and the other coin was identified as being from the Hadrian period. But the authors of the article do not note the minting date of the Hadrian coin and merely mention the reign of Hadrian between 117 and

409 Zelinger, 123.

410 Yehiel Zelinger, Esther Eshel, “Ben Shemen Junction: A Rural Site from the Bar Kokhba Revolt,” *Jerusalem and Eretz-Israel* 8–9 (2013): 267–290 [in Hebrew].

411 *Ibid.*, 276.

138 CE as its chronological range. Zelinger was more decisive in his doctoral thesis when he noted “that the last coin accords with the dating of the group of pottery vessels to the second century CE and helps to determine the last usage date of the complex to the Bar Kokhba revolt.”⁴¹²

The third generation of researchers of the hideout complexes particularly reveal the main difficulties associated with the research on them. In their studies, a significant number of these complexes were compared with similar complexes solely on the basis of their shape, which suggests that they served as hiding places. In the same breath, they added “apparently during the Bar Kokhba revolt.” They claimed that the findings of the hideout complexes in the different regions can serve as evidence for the geographical extent of Bar Kokhba’s control, and for its active participation in the Second Revolt.

In the first stage of the research, the lack of small finds such as coins, jars, cooking pots, or clay lamps that may have helped to date the complex could have been ascribed to the robbery of antiques. But the lack of such finds later on could not again have been caused by this since, in some cases, the complexes exposed in well-ordered archaeological excavations were not disturbed in recent generations by robbery and the finds in them were discovered *in situ*.

Dvir Raviv submitted his MA thesis, written under the supervision of Zissu, to Bar-Ilan University in 2012 on the subject of the settlement in the toparchy of Timna from the end of the Second Temple period to the Bar Kokhba revolt.⁴¹³ Also in 2012, Raviv and Eitan Klein examined the northern border of the area under the control of Bar Kokhba, and their examination focused on the hideout complexes in the area of Gophna and Timna.⁴¹⁴ The discovery of two refuge caves from the period of the Second Revolt in Arak Baten a-Gamia in the cliffs of Nahal Shiloh and in Abud,⁴¹⁵ where coins of the revolt were also found, was the basis for their attempt to include the toparchy areas of Timna and Gophna within the area under the control of Bar Kokhba, thereby extending the borders of the revolt northwards. They surveyed five hideout complexes and four sites in the area of the above-mentioned toparchies. In

⁴¹² Zelinger, diss., 42.

⁴¹³ Dvir Raviv, *The Jewish Settlement in the Toparchy of Timna from the Late Second Temple Period to the Bar Kokhba Revolt*, master’s thesis, (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University, 2012).

⁴¹⁴ Eithan Klein, Dvir Raviv, “Hiding Complexes at the Toparchies of Gophna and Timna and the Northern Borders of the Bar Kokhba Administration,” *Jerusalem and Eretz-Israel* 8–9 (2011): 211–232.

⁴¹⁵ On the refuge caves in general, see below, 239–248. Eithan Klein, Amos Frumkin, “A Refuge Cave in Nahal Shilo,” *Refuge Caves II*, 510–518. For Abud, see Boaz Zissu et al., “Finds from the Bar Kokhba Period from the Abud Cave,” *Refuge Caves II*, 478–509.

their view, Jews were living in those toparchies; they therefore tried to deduce from the discovery of the complexes that the inhabitants of these toparchies took an active part in the Bar Kokhba revolt.

The four sites they surveyed were Kh. Fassa, Kh. Mushaeriq, Kh. Esh-Shuna, and Kh. Ed-Dakakin. These four sites contain a system of subterranean hollow spaces quarried in the rock with interconnecting tunnels and include a variety of architectural features typical of the hideout complexes in the Judean plains from the period of the Bar Kokhba revolt.

In sum, Raviv and Klein indicated that since very few hideout complexes have been excavated in an orderly manner, there is great difficulty in dating them precisely. Yet, despite the fact that no pottery shards were collected in the complexes under discussion to date them to the period of the Bar Kokhba revolt, their complexity does seem to indicate that they were quarried as part of the preparations of the local Jewish inhabitants for this revolt. These complexes testify that even in the north part of Judaea between the toparchy of Aqraba and the Lod plains in the west (including the toparchies of Timna and Gophna), the Jewish settlements played an active role in the course of the Bar Kokhba revolt. Raviv and Klein continued by asserting that this find strengthens the supposition of the researchers who regard Nahal Shiloh as the northern boundary of the Jewish settlement area that participated in the Bar Kokhba revolt and were under the control of the Bar Kokhba administration.⁴¹⁶

The multidisciplinary Twenty-first Conference of Judaea and Samaria Research was held on Thursday, June 16, 2011, at the Ariel University Center in Samaria. One of the abstracts was that of Eitan Klein and Dvir Raviv of the Department of the Land of Israel Studies and Archaeology at Bar-Ilan University on the subject *In the Footsteps of Ancient Documents and Inscriptions: Hiding Complexes in the Southern Hebron Hills*. They asked in amazement how it could be that no hideout complexes could be found in settlements populated by Jews in the southern Hebron Hills, an area that was included within the area of the Bar Kokhba administration. They assumed that if these sites were indeed populated by Jews during the course of the Bar Kokhba revolt, they would be able to locate hideout complexes in at least some of them and ascribe them to the period of the Bar Kokhba revolt!

And of course, they “tried hard and found” six names of Jewish settlement sites that existed in the southern Hebron hills during the period between the two revolts of the Jews against the Romans (from 70 to 136 CE). Those six names were known from the documents discovered in the Judean Desert and from an inscription engraved in a mausoleum in Tiberias. In view of the

⁴¹⁶ Klein, Raviv (above, note 414): 229.

distribution of the Bar Kokhba coins and their discovery even at sites in the southern Hebron hills, it is accepted today that the Jewish inhabitants of that area participated actively in the revolt. Despite this assertion and in contrast with the other areas in Judaea that were included within the area of the Bar Kokhba administration, very few hideout complexes have been found so far in the southern Hebron hills. During the year 2010, I conducted field work at the six ancient sites mentioned above. I estimated that if these sites had indeed been populated by Jews during the Bar Kokhba revolt, I would be able to locate hideout complexes in at least some of them and would therefore be able to justify linking them with the period of the revolt.

In the course of the field work, subterranean hollow spaces found to be linked together by narrow tunnels (which allowed passage through them only by crawling) were discovered in four out of the six sites. Sometimes the tunnels turned at sharp angles and changed their level. Niches were installed along the walls of the tunnels and in the hollowed spaces of the complex to hold candles. The shape and formation of most of the complexes suggest that they served as hiding places, apparently of the Bar Kokhba period. The discovery of hideout complexes at these sites enriches our knowledge about the history of this region and provides additional evidence for the active participation of the inhabitants in the Southern Hebron hills in the revolt.⁴¹⁷

The very fact that the area was populated by Jews highlights the difficulties that entangle the conclusions presented above. Adopting the existence of the hideout complexes, without definite finds from the period of the Second Revolt, as one of the main criteria for determining the range of the revolt may lead research into absurd and overextended conclusions. For example, could the caves in the region of Hadera serve as proof that the war of the revolt took place within the borders of Hadera?⁴¹⁸ Even if we accept the identification of Hursah from the inscription engraved in the mausoleum in Tiberias with Khirbet Khureisa in the Southern Hebron hills,⁴¹⁹ and even if we assume that the entire region was part of the Bar Kokhba state or administration, would the location of burrows contribute anything to the discussion of whether this region participated in the revolt or not? Does the existence of the burrows and

417 E. Klein, Dvir Raviv, "In the Footsteps of Ancient Documents and Inscriptions: Hiding Complexes in the Southern Hebron Hills," *Judea and Samaria Research Studies* 21 (2012): 89–105.

418 Dov Zudkevits, *Bethar and the Bar Kokhba War in the Hadera Region: From Caesarea to the Mountains of Ephraim* (Hadera: 1988).

419 Y. Stepanisky, "The Inscription 'Yosef ben Elazar ben Shila of Horsha' from Tiberias," *Judaea and Samaria Research Studies* 9 (2000): 135–146 [in Hebrew].

hideout complexes confirm that the local inhabitants rebelled? At most, it may be claimed that the residents were afraid and took care that they would have a place of refuge. The same interpretation can be given to the complexes even if they were not included in the area of the revolt.⁴²⁰ Elhanan Samet, in his discussion of the term *mahbo(a)* and the evidence for the existence of hideout complexes in rabbinical sources, claimed that the burrows were not suitable for conducting warfare from them. Through his discussion of sources, he reached the conclusion that they served mainly as hiding places for women and for the population that did not take part in the battles.⁴²¹ Taking his cue from Samet, Zeev Safrai first rejected the conclusion that the hideaway burrows were only a Jewish phenomenon! Then he concluded—because they were scattered throughout the country and were characteristic of built-up settlements and not of strategic constructions (such as roadways)—that the complexes existed mainly to hide in, as refuges, and not for assault purposes, as military bases. These hiding places were mainly occupied by women.⁴²²

Yadin distinguished between refuge caves, and the winding, planned hideout complexes that served both as hiding places and as defense against attackers. The natural caves located in the cliffs above streams in the Judean Desert, like the Murabba'at caves, the Cave of Letters, the Cave of Horror, and Wadi Daliya are examples of the former; while the complexes exposed in the Judean plains exemplify the latter.⁴²³ This distinction between refuge caves and hideout complexes stresses the difference between them but also their resemblance. Both refer to a place of refuge and secrecy in a war region, familiar and accepted factors long before the Second Revolt. The caves in the mountains of Judaea and the natural caves along the western shores of the Dead Sea often served as places of refuge.⁴²⁴

420 Y. Govrin, "Villages of Burganin in 'Daromah,'" *Judaea and Samaria Research Studies* 5 (1995): 183–194. Because I date the limes to a later period, I reject Govrin's argument that villages in the Southern Hebron hills did not participate in the revolt since they had commercial relations with the Roman Limes.

421 Elhanan Samet, "Mahbo(a): Evidence from the Mishnah Tosefta and Talmud for the Existence of Hideouts," *Nikrot Zurim* 13 (1986): 9–17.

422 Zeev Safrai, "The Phenomenon of the Hiding Place as Reflected in the Rabbinic Tradition," in *In the Highland's Depth*, Ephraim Range and Binyamin Research Studies 1 (2011): 33–44 [in Hebrew].

423 Yadin, "Remarks," 43.

424 See Lapp (above, note 45). For their review and conclusions about the Wadi Daliyah caves, which served as a refuge place for rebels who escaped from the authorities as early as the conquest of Eretz Israel by Alexander the Great.

2.1.5.2 Refuge Caves

The distinction made by Yadin between hideout complexes and refuge caves was the basis for extensive studies that preferred to use the term *refuge caves*. In 1998, Eshel and David Amit edited a collection of essays called *Refuge Caves of the Bar Kokhba Revolt*. A map of 27 refuge caves was published in this collection.⁴²⁵ These caves were located geographically in the region of the Dead Sea and included, from north to south, the following: the caves of Wadi Murabba'at, the Cave of the Pool in Naḥal David, the caves in Naḥal Hever, the Treasure Cave in Naḥal Mishmar, the caves of Naḥal Tze'elim, the Cave of the Mikve in Naḥal Harduf, the Cave of the Skull, the Cave of the Arrow, the Cave of the Scrolls, and the Cave of Yahel to the west of Neve Zohar. Other caves from the north to the south of Judaea, include in the region of the Samaritan desert and the northern part of the Judaean desert: the Cave of 'Iraq en Na'saneh in Wadi ed Daliyeh, the Cave of Wadi el-Makuk,⁴²⁶ Ketef Jericho,⁴²⁷ the Cave of Avior, the Cave of the Sandal,⁴²⁸ the caves of Wadi Suweinit in Naḥal Michmash, the Cave of 'Aleiliyât,⁴²⁹ the El-Jay Cave (Southern Bank), and the Cave of El Matzia in Naḥal Darga.⁴³⁰

In 2009, a second collection on the refuge caves was published, edited by Eshel and Porat.⁴³¹ The collection gave a review of the refuge caves that had

425 See *Refuge Caves I*, 15, a map of the Refuge Caves. See also Hanan Eshel, "A Survey of the Refuge Caves and their Legal Documents," in *Halakhah in Light of Epigraphy*, 2011, eds. Albert I. Baumgarten, Hanan Eshel, Ranon Katzoff, Shani Tzoref (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 103–153.

426 Hanan Eshel, "A Coin of Bar Kokhba from a Cave in Wadi el-Mackuk," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 9 (1986–1987): 51–52.

427 Hanan Eshel, "Ketef Yeriho 1993," *Israel Exploration Journal* 45 (1995): 292–298; Hanan Eshel, Boaz Zissu, "Ketef Jericho: Archaeological Introduction," in *Miscellaneous Texts from the Judaean Desert (Discoveries in the Judaean Desert x)*, eds. James Charlesworth, et al. in consultation with James VanderKam, Monica Brady. (Oxford; New York: Clarendon, 2000): 3–20.

428 Hanan Eshel, Boaz Zissu, "Roman Coins from the 'Cave of the Sandal' West of Jericho," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 13 (1994–99): 70–77.

429 Joseph Patrich, "Jewish Hideout Complexes and Aramaic Inscriptions at the Cliffs of Nahal Michmash at the 'Aleiliyât Caves," *Nikrot Zurim* 8 (1984): 8–17. Zeev Ehrlich, "The 'Aleiliyât Caves (Response)," *Nikrot Zurim* 9 (1985): 99–98; Joseph Patrich, "Answer," 99 [in Hebrew].

430 Joseph Patrich, "The Excavations in El Matzia Cave at Nahal Darga," *Nikeot Zurim* 13 (1987): 76–87. I excluded the cave(s) that were not found yet in Wadi Zarqa Main on the eastern bank of the Jordan. See *Refuge Caves I*, 15, number 14.

431 *Refuge Caves II*, 2, a map of the Refuge Caves; and on page 3, Tables 1 & 2, listing the caves. See also page 5, map 2, a list of caves between Qumran and Ein Gedi.

previously been surveyed and added another ten refuge complexes. The geographical location of these complexes was in the region of the Dead Sea. From north to south (south of Qumran): the Christmas Cave; the Cave of the Coin in the region between Ein Gedi and Qumran; the Cave of the Denarius; the Cave of the Spear;⁴³² the Cave of the Salvadora; the Cave of the Figs; the Šabar Cave; the Har Yishai Cave⁴³³ in Naḥhal Arugot; caves 344, 348, and 349⁴³⁴ east of Antipatris; the Cave of Abud west of Bethar; the caves of Naḥal Soreq; the Teomim Cave on the lower slopes of the Judean mountain;⁴³⁵ the Tur Šafa Cave near Tarqumiyah;⁴³⁶ and to the south of the Hebron hills there are the caves of Umm el Ḥatib of Ark el Batn. They also noted other complexes near the Dead Sea which may also have been used as refuge caves at the end of the revolt, such as the Naḥal Kedem cave, the caves of Netifim (304), and the Stalactities Cave (304) in Naḥhal Arugot.

In 2010, a team engaged in research on the caves of the Judean desert, published information about a number of additional refuge caves—such as the Cave of the Shepherds and the Cave of “To Nachum my slave”—that had not been known earlier in the region between Ein Gedi and Qumran.⁴³⁷ When research began on the refuge complexes during the 1950s and continued later on in the 1960s, the main finds were made in the north and south of Judaea among the cliffs of the Dead Sea. Does the study of the new updates on the refuge complexes tell us anything about the regions as places where the rebels found refuge at the end of the revolt that we had not known previously?

432 Roi Porat, “The ‘Caves of the Spear’: Refuge Caves from the Bar-Kokhba Revolt North of ‘En-Gedi,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 59 (2009): 21–46.

433 Roi Porat, Hanan Eshel, Uri Davidovich, Sorin Lisker, Eli Raz, Amos Frumkin. “Bar Kokhba Refuge Caves in the Area Between Ein Gedi and Qumran: In Light of the Renewed Project in the Judean Desert,” *Journal of Dead-Sea and Arava Research* 2 (2010): 1–20 [in Hebrew]. See also Roi Porat, *Bar Kokhba Refuge Caves in the Vicinity Ein Gedi-Qumran in Light of the Renewed Research in the Judean Desert*, M.A. Thesis (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University, 2006).

434 Roi Porat, “Bar Kokhba Refuge Caves in the Cliffs of Nahal Arugot,” *Judea and Samaria Research* 15 (2006): 107–132 [in Hebrew].

435 Boaz Zissu et al. “Coins from the Bar Kokhba Revolt Hidden in Me‘arat Ha-Te’omim (Mūghâret Umm et Tûeimîn), Western Jerusalem Hills,” *Israel Numismatic Journal* (2009–2010) 17: 113–147.

436 David Amit, Amos Frumkin, “Tur Šafa Cave: A Refuge Cave (?) in Western Mount Hebron from the Bar–Kokhba Revolt Period,” *Judea and Samaria Research* 12 (2003): 157–161 [in Hebrew].

437 R. Porat, H. Eshel, U. Davidovich, S. Lisker, E. Raz, A. Frumkin, (above, note 121), 12. The cave is named after an eight-century BCE seal found in it with the inscription: “לנחם עבדי”.

And can the refuge complexes be connected with the area in which the revolt had extended?

The refuge caves that are connected with the end of the Bar Kokhba revolt are indeed located in Judaea, in the area of the geographical extension of the revolt. Some of the refuge caves indicate that those who escaped from the war of the revolt fled to natural caves, where they hoped to find refuge from the Roman enemy that, at a later stage of the revolt, aggressively pursued the rebels. It may be assumed that they fled to the caves nearest to the place where the revolt died out. One of the caves in particular, the northernmost one in the area of the Samaritan desert, 'Iraq en Na'saneh in Wadi ed Daliyeh, exemplifies the nature of the escape by those who fled from the war of the revolt. This area had been known as a place of refuge since the fourth century BCE, and therefore it is not surprising that in fleeing, the rebels searched for places of refuge like this.⁴³⁸ Other refuge caves were connected with the administrative and military centers of the revolt. It is probable that the rebels who were active in Herodium fled to the cave of El Matzia, and those who had been besieged in Bethar chose to flee to the Teomim Cave and the caves in the neighboring Nahal Soreq. The rebels in the area of Ein Gedi, which was active during the revolt, fled to refuge caves in the western parts of the northern and southern Judaea; and those in Jericho fled to a number of caves in the northern region of the Judean desert.

Alongside the wide-ranging research on the hideout complexes and the refuge caves, a growing interest arose in the study of the coins of the Second Revolt,⁴³⁹ most of which were found in the hideout and refuge complexes that have been exposed over the past thirty years. This enabled the updating of the coin distribution maps that had previously been sketched by Miltenberg and Barag. At a conference held in 2000 at Bar-Ilan University, Zissu and Eshel presented a geographical update of the Bar Kokhba coins that were discovered in scientific archaeological excavations conducted between 1980 and 2000.⁴⁴⁰

438 See above, note 45.

439 See Chaim. J. Kaufman, "Additions to the Corpus of Leo Miltenberg's Coinage of Bar Kokhba War," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 14 (2000–2002): 129–152; idem, "Additions to the Corpus of Leo Miltenberg's Coinage of the Bar Kokhba War (Second Addendum)," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 16 (2008): 136–139.

440 Boaz Zissu, Hanan Eshel, "The Bar Kokhba Coins—A Geographical Update: What Was Renewed in the Last Twenty Years (1980–2000)," in *New Studies on the Bar Kokhba Revolt*, 17–40. For the map, see page 33; and on page 34, find a table, including coins originating from archaeological excavations. At the same time, Zissu submitted his diss., including a ch., *The Distribution of the Bar Kokhba Coins* (pages 310–325). The map is on page 325, and the table is on page 324. For an English version, see Boaz Zissu, Hanan Eshel, "The



FIGURE 2.13 *Wahita Refuge Caves Northwest from Jehrico.*
PHOTO BY BOAZ ZISSU.

The update included coins from 31 sites, including those places in Barag's survey. As seen previously, on the basis of the hideout complexes and the coin finds in them, various scholars shifted the northern and southern borders of the Bar Kokhba administration and perhaps even the extent of the military deployment of the revolt.

A study of the table of the amassed data of the Bar Kokhba coins discovered in the hideout complexes through archaeological excavations shows that a total of 929 coins were found at the thirty-one sites; on the face of it, an impressive quantity! However, their division among the sites raises a few reservations. First, 822 Bar Kokhba bronze coins are from the hoard in Herodium: 55 of them of year one of the revolt, 345 of the undated series, and 52 of the irregular types.⁴⁴¹ Twenty-two coins are from the hoard in Khirbet Zalit,⁴⁴² fifteen from the fortress in Herodium,⁴⁴³ fourteen from Khirbet Aqed,⁴⁴⁴ and ten from

Geographical Distribution of Coins from the Bar Kokhba War," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 14 (2000–2002): 157–167, with a map on page 166. The difference between the maps is that the same site is named differently. In the earlier map, the name is el-Hih, and in the later maps, Ḥ. 'Ethri.

441 Augusto Spijkerman, *Herodion III*. *Catalogo delle monete* (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1972).

442 Gabriela Bijovsky, "The Coins from Horbat Zalit," *Atiqot* 39 (2000): 155–189.

443 Spijkerman (above, note 441), 17–21.

444 See Arie Kindler, "Coins and Remains from a Mobile Mint of Bar Kokhba at Khirbet el-Aqd," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 9 (1986–1987): 46–50.

Wadi Murabba'at.⁴⁴⁵ At all the other sites, between one and four Bar Kokhba coins were found.

There were a number of hideout complexes in which many coins of various types were discovered, and yet very few Bar Kokhba coins were found in them. For example, in Khirbet 'Ethri, more than 800 coins were found dating from the fourth century BCE until the fourth century CE. The years between the Great Revolt and the Bar Kokhba revolt are represented in coins of cities and in imperial denarii of Vespasian, Trajan, and Hadrian, but only five were Bar Kokhba coins, one of year one, another of year two, and three of year three.⁴⁴⁶

In the village of Qiryat Sefer—Khirbet Badd 'Isa, 365 coins were found in an excavation, 195 of them in two hoards. The first included 147 coins, the latest in date being a Hadrian one denarius coin of the year 128 CE. The second comprised forty-eight coins issued over a long period of time, beginning with the third century BCE. This hoard included coins from the Hasmonaean to the Hadrian period. In the settlement itself, coins were found that had been over-struck during the course of the Second Revolt.⁴⁴⁷

By contrast, in Khirbet Ilma, north of Beit Guvrin, two hideout complexes were exposed, and although no coins of any kind were found in them, a lead weight of the Bar Kokhba administration was discovered in one of the burrows. The inscription on the weight is *Shimon ben Kosba, Prince of Israel*..., and on the other side is the inscription *Shimon*, apparently a *parnas* of the Bar Kokhba administration who was active in the Beit Guvrin area. This is a find of great importance and undoubtedly tells us of the part played by this region in the Bar Kokhba administration.⁴⁴⁸

445 A hoard of 213 silver coins was bought from the Bedouins, who claimed that it was found in Wadi Murabba'at included not even one Bar Kokhba coin. See Józef T. Milik, Henry Seyrig, "Trésor monétaire de Murabba'at," *Revue Numismatique* 4 (1958): 11–26.

446 Boaz Zissu, Amir Ganor, "Horvat 'Ethri—A Jewish Village from the Second Temple Period and the Bar Kokhba Revolt in the Judean Foothills," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 60 (2009): 90–136; Boaz Zissu, Hanan Eshel, Boaz Langford, Amos Frumkin, "Coins from the Bar Kokhba Revolt Hidden in Mearat Ha-Teomim (Mughâret Umm et Tûeimîn), Western Jerusalem Hills," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 17 (2010): 113–147.

447 On the site, see Yitzhak Magen, "Khirbet Badd 'Isa—Qiryat Sefer," in *The Land of Benjamin*, eds. Yitzhak Magen et al. (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2004), 179–241. On the coins, see Gabriela Bijovsky, "The Coins from Khirbet Badd 'Isa—Qiryat Sefer: Isolated Coins and Two Hoards Dated to the Bar-Kokhba Revolt," in *The Land of Benjamin*, 243–300.

448 Amos Kloner, "Lead Weights of Bar Kokhba's Administration," *Israel Exploration Journal* 40 (1990): 58–67. For other lead weights, see R. Deutsch, "A Lead Weight of Shimon bar Kokhba," *Israel Exploration Journal* 51 (2001): 96–98. Idem, "A Lead Weight of Hadrian: The Prototype for the Bar Kokhba Weights," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 14 (2000–2002): 125–128.

These comments on the coin finds, the hideout complexes, and the fact that the research is still ongoing necessitate greater caution in drawing geographical conclusions. In the 1980s, the northernmost site in which coins of the revolt had been found was Khirbet Aqed, but in the survey of 2000–2002, the northern point was moved to the west of the Benjamin mountains, to Khirbet Burnat (South) where a large numismatic hoard was found. Included in this hoard were two medium-sized bronze coins that had been overstruck by the Bar Kokhba administration, one of year two of the revolt and the other belonging to the undated series attributed to year three of the revolt.⁴⁴⁹ The southern border also moved, southwards to Khirbet Yattir, on the southern slopes of the Hebron hills, in which a cache of thirty-one coins were found, among them

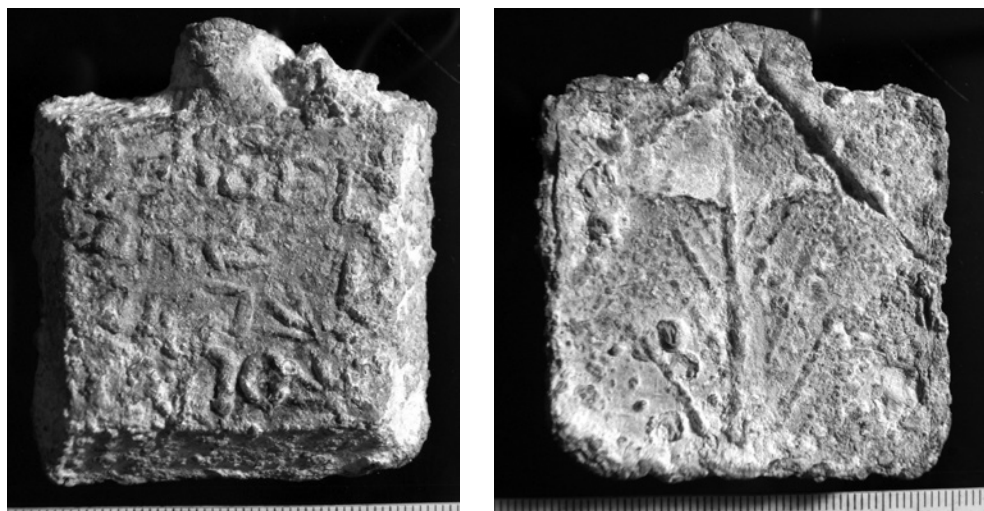


FIGURE 2.14 *Lead Weights of Bar Kokhba's Administration.*
PHOTO BY BOAZ ZISSU.

Idem, "A Further Lead Weight of Shimon Bar Kokhba," *INJ* 15 (2003–6): 77–78. Boaz Zissu, Amir Ganor, "A Lead Weight of Bar Kokhba's Administration," *Israel Exploration Journal* 56 (2006): 178–182.

- 449 Eshel, Zissu (above, note 440), 18–19. See also Gabriela Bijovsky, "The Coins from Khirbet Burnat (southwest)," *Atiqot* 69 (2012): 147–155. On page 148, she lists 2 coins dated to the Bar Kokhba revolt: a medium bronze of the second year of the revolt (133/134 CE) and another coin of Bar Kokhba, of the same type and date, that was unearthed during the 2000 excavation season. The Bar Kokhba coins from the site might suggest that it was abandoned before the end of the revolt, in 134/135 CE.

three coins of the period of the revolt, a denarius of year two, a small undated bronze coin, and a medium-sized coin of an undated series.⁴⁵⁰

In 2004, continuing the discussion on the coins and hoards from Khirbet Badd'Isa—Qiryat Sefer, Gabriela Bijovsky wrote an article dealing with the distribution of the Bar Kokhba coins.⁴⁵¹ On her map, the northernmost point at which Bar Kokhba coins were found was also in Khirbet Burnat (South),⁴⁵² while the southernmost point was Khirbet Katzara, a guard post on the Nabataean spice route where David Alon collected medium-sized undated bronze coins.⁴⁵³

In 2007, David Amit and Gabriela Bijovsky again updated the distribution of the coins of the revolt on the northwestern border of the area that they believed was under the control of the Bar Kokhba rebels to accord with the coin find from Khirbet Burnat (North). This find included three coins dated to year two and another Bar Kokhba coin of year one, which had been found in the 1980s during the excavations at Khirbet Zikhrin.⁴⁵⁴ They marked Khirbet Zikhrin as the northernmost point on map number 1, and by doing so, they moved the border of rebel control five kilometers northwards.⁴⁵⁵

In his first collection, Eshel had summarized the coin findings from the refuge caves, and the situation was fairly similar to the finds in the hideout complexes. A total of 255 coins were found, of which 213 were silver coins from the Wadi Murabba'at hoard, 26 from the Cave of the Sandal, 18 from Wadi ed Daliyeh, and 16 from the El-Jai cave.⁴⁵⁶ Only 24 of them were Bar Kokhba coins. In all the other complexes, only single coins were found.⁴⁵⁷

In the Teomim cave, three coin hoards were found. Hoard A contained eighty-three silver coins that were minted by the Bar Kokhba administration: twenty *sela'* (tetradrachms) and sixty-three *zuzim* (denarii). The coins represent

450 Yuval Goren, Peter Fabian, "Coinage in the Period of the Bar Kochba Revolt in View of Findings in the Tunnel Site in the Yattir Area," *Niqrot Zurim* 7 (1983): 60–61 [in Hebrew].

451 Bijovsky (above, note 447): 248–251 and a map on page 250.

452 I am excluding from the map, the sites Tel Mikhal, Kibbutz Ma'barot, and Caesarea, where Bar Kokhba coins were found.

453 Bijovsky (above, note 447): 249, and note 49, argues that since the origin of the coin is questionable, we cannot use it as evidence for the most southern point. For the same reason she rejects the bronze coin from Kibbutz Gat. See Eshel, Zissu (above note 440), 21.

454 Moseh Fisher, "Excavations at Horvat Zikrin," *Qadmoniot* 18 (1986): 112–121 [in Hebrew].

455 David Amit, Gabriela Bijovsky, "A Numismatic Update on the Northwestern Border of the Territory Controlled by Bar Kokhba Rebels," *Israel Numismatic Research* 2 (2007): 133–136.

456 Hanan Eshel, "Coins from the el-Jai Cave in Nahal Mikhmarsh (Wadi Suweinit)," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 14 (2000–2002): 168–175.

457 Hanan Eshel, "The Coins from the Refuge Caves," *Refuge Caves* 1, 213–219 [in Hebrew].

all three years of the minting. Hoard B contained ten coins: six Roman denarii, a coin of Hyrcanus I, a shekel coin of year two of the Great Revolt, and two denarii of the Bar Kokhba coins. Hoard C contained twenty-four coins found together *in situ*: five gold coins, fifteen silver coins, four bronze coins of the Ashkelon mint, and two denarii of the Bar Kokhba coins.⁴⁵⁸

In the area of Ein Gedi, two refuge caves were found. The Har Yishai Cave had eleven bronze coins and twelve arrowheads, and the Sabar Cave contained a hoard of nine silver coins, including a Bar Kokhba tetradrachm and six Roman denarii and two denarii overstruck by Bar Kokhba.⁴⁵⁹ In the Tur Şafa Cave, twenty-six coins of various values were found: twenty bronze coins and six silver denarii. In the Abud cave, twelve coins were found, of which five were Bar Kokhba coins.⁴⁶⁰ Can the find of one or more coins at a site, even if they were found in well-ordered archaeological excavations, assist at all in sketching the map of the Bar Kokhba administration?

In a discussion of naval battles that occurred during the Second Revolt, Eck noted that regardless of where these battles occurred, it is clear that the areas of warfare were not always those under the full control of Bar Kokhba. Therefore



FIGURE 2.15 Hoards A and B from the Teomim Cave.

PHOTO BY BOAZ ZISSU.

458 Boaz Zissu, Hanan Eshel, Boaz Langford, Amos Frumkin, "The Coins from the Teomim Cave," in Eshel, Porat, *Refuge Caves II*, 423–453 [in Hebrew].

459 Roi Porat, Hanan Eshel, Amos Frumkin, "Finds from the Bar Kokhba Revolt from Two Caves at Ein Gedi," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 139 (2007): 35–53; Roi Porat, "Two Groups of Coins from the Bar Kokhba War from Ein Gedi," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 15 [2003–2006] (2006): 79–86.

460 Boaz Zissu, Boaz Langford, Roi Porat, Uri Davidovitz, Amos Frumkin, "Finds from the Bar Kokhba Period from the Abud Cave," in *Refuge Caves II*, 492–496 [in Hebrew].

he deemed it impossible to learn anything from the coins about the area of warfare. But his words that the naval battles constitute “a decisive argument against the common assumption that the battles took place only in that area where coins minted by Bar Kokhba were in circulation,”⁴⁶¹ raise the question of whether he expected to find coins of the Second Revolt in the Mediterranean, or the Kinneret, or perhaps in the Dead Sea. What is the *common assumption*? In footnote 49, he actually refers to the article of Barag. How can this be? Dan Barag, followed by Eshel-Zissu and Bijovsky, dealt with the geographical distribution of the coins! Their conclusions were that on the basis of the coin distribution, one could derive the range of the area under Bar Kokhba's control. None of them claimed that the coin distribution was evidence of the location of the Bar Kokhba battles! His statement that the naval battles are evidence for the non-correspondence between the coin finds and the battle sites has no relevance to the issue! Moreover, all those who dealt with the coin distribution and the hideout complexes tried to define the area under the control of the rebels at least during the first stages of the revolt.⁴⁶²

As mentioned above, most of the coins of the Second Revolt were overstruck on coins that were in current use. As for the question of how the Bar Kokhba administration obtained the coins for overstriking, there are various answers, beginning with the levying of taxes and ending with the plunder amassed in the various battles. However, the finds in the hideout complexes and refuge caves show that the Jewish population under the control of the Bar Kokhba administration, continued to make use of the coinage of the marketplace alongside the coins of the revolt. This fact may also explain the scarcity of the coins of the revolt found in the hoards discovered in the well-ordered archaeological excavations.⁴⁶³

Comments in the text above about the hideout complexes and the refuge caves in Judaea in general and in the Judean plains in particular are not meant to deny the participation of this region in the Second Revolt. On the contrary, this region, densely populated by Jews,⁴⁶⁴ was at the forefront of

461 Eck, “Epigraphic Transmission,” 165.

462 Boaz Zissu, Hanan Eshel, “Coins and Hoards from the Time of the Bar Kokhba Revolt,” in *Hoards and Genizot as Chapters in History*, Ofra Guri-Rimmon, Curator (Haifa: Hecht Museum, 2013), 34*.

463 Hanan Eshel, “The Policy of Overstriking Roman Coins during the Bar Kokhba Revolt in Light of Finds from the Judean Desert,” *Judea and Samaria Research Studies* 5 (1995): 173–182 [in Hebrew].

464 See Varda Sussman, *Ornamented Jewish Oil-Lamps. From the Destruction of the Second Temple Through the Bar Kokhba Revolt* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1982), 16–17; V. Sussman, *Oil-Lamps in the Holy Land: Saucer Lamps:*

confrontation with the Roman forces brought over from Egypt to suppress the revolt. Together with other forces, they landed on the coastal plain and chose, for military reasons, to move along the coastal lowlands. This choice was easier for the heavily armored legions attempting to penetrate into the Judean mountains.⁴⁶⁵ There was a well-developed network of strategic roads in that region that linked the lowlands of Judaea with a number of rebel centers. This road system included, for example, the Hebron-Beit Guvrin highway and the Lakhish-Idhna-Tapuach-Hebron road. These routes were topographically preferable, and fortresses had been built along them for protection.⁴⁶⁶

Although no evidence exists for the active participation of this region in the revolt, it is reasonable to suppose that in the first stages, the rebels enjoyed local successes because of the tactical failures of the Romans, who did not adjust their methods of warfare to the characteristics of the region. The appearance of Julius Severus; the change in warfare methods; the slow, grinding activity that Severus adopted against the rebels with the help of large military forces—all these changed the situation of the rebels diametrically.⁴⁶⁷ Some of them apparently managed to flee the battlefield and find refuge in the hideout complexes in the region.

Even in the absence of definite information about what occurred during the course of the revolt in the Judean plains, the situation in the region after its suppression indicates the extent of the revolt in that place. The northern part of the Judean plains was almost entirely emptied of its Jewish inhabitants,

From the Beginning to the Hellenistic Period: Collection of the Israeli Antiquities Authority (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2007). According to Sussman, the Jewish population after the destruction centered in Emmaus west of Jerusalem, in Bethlehem in the east, and Hebron and Beth Guvrin in the south. The many decorated oil lamps found and produced in the region testify to a dense Jewish population. Applebaum, "Results," argued that the pattern of the Menorah on the oil lamps represents the Jewish rebels' propaganda in the region during the Second Revolt. However, I think that this is no evidence at all. Decorated oil lamps were produced from 70 until the suppression of the Second Revolt, and this was done only to mark their Jewish character and identity. Furthermore, I reject Applebaum's attempt to link these oil lamps with similar oil lamps from Cyrene. See Shimeon Applebaum, *Jews and Greeks in Ancient Cyrene* (Leiden: Brill, 1979), 240–241.

465 See, for example, 1 Macc. 4: 26–36: Lysias' Journeys during the Hasmonean Revolt; See Bezalel Bar Kochva, *Judas Maccaebaeus: The Struggle against the Seleucids* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 276–279. It should be indicated that Severus, too, knew the dangers involved in moving in the region of the Judean Mountains, and therefore it is clear that he preferred the roads in the Shephela.

466 Kokhavi, *Judea, Samaria and the Golan*, 26.

467 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 52–56.

who were concentrated mainly in the southern part of it.⁴⁶⁸ A similar picture arises from the outcome of the revolt in the region of Judaea itself. The main struggle, as discussed previously, was focused in the villages around the two centers: Herodium and Bethar. After the encirclement and capture of the rebels, some fled to the caves of the Judaeian desert and some entrenched themselves under the command of their leader in Bethar. When Bethar fell, the revolt was suppressed in Judaea. This suppression and the damage caused by the Romans during the course of the war led to extensive changes in the settlements. These results were described by Dio Cassius with great exaggeration: "Fifty of their main fortresses, and nine hundred and eight-five of their most important villages were destroyed." However, the destruction of the settlements in the mountains of Jerusalem and Hebron echoes even in this exaggerated description. After the suppression of the revolt, these regions were emptied of their Jewish population, which wandered south and settled in the southern Hebron hills.

2.1.6 *Jerusalem*

The conquest of Jerusalem by the Jewish rebels, the expulsion of Legio x Fretensis and liberation from Roman rule, and the renewal of the cult, and the reconstruction of the Temple were perceived by some scholars as the main aims of the Second Revolt and the most important achievements of the rebels. This is because they considered the liberation of Jerusalem as an important stage in the process of regaining political independence.⁴⁶⁹ However, those scholars do not possess any direct and certain evidence of the conquest of Jerusalem by the rebels and the building of the Temple by Bar Kokhba. Their claims are based on indirect testimonies from which it might presumably be inferred that the city had indeed been conquered and was under the control of the rebels. An examination of these testimonies, which will clarify the questions at the center of this discussion, will include investigations of the following:

468 Kloner, "Complexes," 23; See also Joshua J. Schwartz, "The Jewish Community at the Judaeian Region and the Southern Coast during the Third and Fourth Centuries," in *Eretz Israel from the Destruction of the Second Temple to the Muslim Conquest*, 182–201 [in Hebrew].

469 Note the following studies on this subject: Yeivin, 75–86; Abramski, 84–92; Ben-Zion Luria, "The Temple during the Bar Kokhba Revolt," *Beth Mikra* 7 (1972): 70–84 [in Hebrew, =idem, *The Copper Scroll* (Jerusalem: Kiryat Sefer, 1963), 23–46 [in Hebrew]. Smallwood, 444–445; Schürer, I, 545–546. See Schäfer's detailed discussion in ch. 4: "Die Rückeroberung Jerusalems und der Wiederaufbau des Tempels."

1. Testimonies and sources that indicate the conquest of Jerusalem by the rebels and their control over it
2. Sources that describe the renewal of the cult and the reconstruction of the Temple

2.1.6.1 Testimonies for the Conquest of Jerusalem

Jewish Sources

1. **Midrashic Literature:** The only source in which there is an explicit mention of the conquest of Jerusalem by Hadrian is in Midrash Tanhuma to Devarim 7 to Deut. 10:17 (ed Buber):

The wicked Hadrian when he had conquered Jerusalem, he was puffing himself up and saying I have overcome Jerusalem by my own power. Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai said to him: Do not take pride. If it was not (decreed) from heaven, you would not have conquered.⁴⁷⁰

Can this source actually serve as reliable historical evidence of the fact that Emperor Hadrian conquered Jerusalem from the rebels who had held it? The mention of the name of Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai together with Hadrian in a midrash dated to the fifth century CE or later refutes any possibility that this source can be considered reliable testimony of the conquest of the city by Hadrian. The claim of Herr, that the mention of Hadrian's name in the source is related to the fact that during his reign an attempt had been made to rebuild the Temple,⁴⁷¹ cannot withstand criticism. First, the source speaks about the *conquest of Jerusalem* and not the destruction of the Temple. Second, the mention of Hadrian's name in the source is *lectio difficilior* and lacks any philological or historical basis. Schäfer argued that there is no philological basis for preferring the name of Hadrian over that of Titus.⁴⁷² He further asserted, with regard to the historical basis, that the source combined two frequently mentioned motifs in rabbinical sources: (1) the conquest of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple, which were connected with the

⁴⁷⁰ "אדריאנוס הרשע כשכיבש את ירושלים היה מתגאה לומר כיבשתי את ירושלים בכח, אמר רבן יוחנן בן זכאי, אל תתגאה אלולי שהיה מן השמים לא כבשת"

⁴⁷¹ Moshe David Herr, "Persecutions and Martyrdom in Hadrian Days," *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 23 (1972): 116, note 11.

⁴⁷² Schäfer, 81.

name of Titus,⁴⁷³ and (2) the deification of the emperor and his arrogance, which were connected with Hadrian.⁴⁷⁴ In this source, these two motifs were woven together around the personality of Hadrian.⁴⁷⁵ The source, therefore, does not constitute historical evidence for the conquest of Jerusalem, but testifies to the way in which later generations expanded the system of relations that Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai held with Roman army officers and with emperors.⁴⁷⁶

2. Talmudic Literature:

TJ, Ta'anit IV 68–69; *TB*, Gittin, 57a–58b; *Midrash Lamentations Rabba*, II, 4.

These sources are the main and most comprehensive descriptions of the Bar Kokhba revolt. But they make no mention at all of the conquest of Jerusalem during the first stages neither of the revolt, the control of the city by the rebels during the course of the revolt, nor of its subsequent conquest by the Romans. Nevertheless, various scholars have tried to find testimonies to the events mentioned above in these rabbinical sources.

Yeivin found in Megillat Ta'anit evidence for the conquest of Jerusalem by the rebels.⁴⁷⁷ Despite the difficulties in determining the time of composition for this text, most of the scholars who dealt with this question believed that it had been composed during the period of Roman rule in Palestine before the

473 For the discussion of the sources on this subject, see Günther Stemberger, "Rom in der rabbinischen Literatur," *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* II, 19/2 (1979): 351–358.

474 For sources that describe Hadrian's arrogance and deification, see, for example: *Tanhumah, Bereshit*, 7: "After Hadrian the king of Edom, conquered the entire world, he returned to Rome and told his countries: I command you to acclaim me a divine being, for I have subjugated the entire world." Whereupon they replied: You do not rule the Holy City and the Temple. "He went there, conquered the Holy City, demolished the Temple and exiled the Israelites. Upon his return to Rome he said: 'Now I have destroyed his house, burned His holy place, and exiled his people, worship me as a divine being.'" (translated Samuel A. Berman, *Midrash Tanhuma–Yelammedenu*, Hoboken NJ: KTAV Publishing 1995, 24–25): אנדריאנוס מלך אדום כיון שכבש את העולם כולו, הלך לו לרומי. אמר לבני פלטרין שלו: מבקש אני מכם שתעשו אותי אלוה, שהרי כבשתי את כל העולם. אמרו לו: עדיין לא שלטת בעירו ובביתו. הלך והספיקו בידו והחריב בית המקדש והגלה את ישראל וחזר לרומי, אמר להם: כבר החרבתי ביתו ושרפתי היכלו והגלתי עמו, עשו אותי אלוה.

See Schäfer, 90, and Stemberger, (above, note 5), 365. *Exodus Rabba*, 51: 5:

"אמר ר' שמעון בר יוחאי: בשעה שנכנס אנדריאנוס לבית קדשי הקדושים היה מתגאה שם ומחרף לאלוהים."

For parallels to this Midrash, see *Tanhumah*, Pekudei, 4; *Tanhumah*, Pekudei, 3 (Buber ed.).

475 Schäfer, 80.

476 See Jacob Neusner, *Development of a Legend. Studies on the Traditions Concerning Yohanan ben Zakkai* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 173–174.

477 Yeivin, 149–152.

destruction of the Second Temple.⁴⁷⁸ Yeivin also agreed with this determination, but thought that during the generation following the Bar Kokhba revolt, certain commemorative dates had been added that were related to the revolts that occurred during the period of Trajan and Hadrian.⁴⁷⁹ Among these additional dates, Yeivin located three that were assigned in relation to the conquest of Jerusalem by the rebel forces of Bar Kokhba:

a. The sixteenth day

On the seventeenth (of Elul): The Romans evacuated Judah and Jerusalem.⁴⁸⁰

The difficulties in interpreting this memorial day arise from the incompatibility between the Scholion, which assigns the event to the period of Hellenistic rule, and the Megilla, according to which the memorial day was in commemoration of the departure of the Romans from Jerusalem. Some of the scholars who dealt with this date changed the version in the Megilla to make it conform with the Scholion. They corrected in various ways the reading of the word רומאי (Roman), which they thought was a corruption, in order to make it compatible with the period of Seleucid rule.⁴⁸¹ Others, who understood the word literally, rejected what was described in the Scholion and claimed that the memorial day was in commemoration of the departure of the Romans from Jerusalem during the early stages of the Great Revolt.⁴⁸²

478 For a detailed discussion about the research of Megillat Ta'anit, see Ido Hampel, *Megillat Ta'anit*, diss. submitted to Tel Aviv University (Tel Aviv: 1986) [in Hebrew]. For its dating, see pages 80–81. Vered Noam, *Megillat Ta'anit: Versions: Interpretation, History with a Critical Edition* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 2003) [in Hebrew]. Idem, "Megillat Ta'anit—The Scroll of Fasting," in *The Literature of the Sages*, eds. Shemuel Safrai, et al. (Assen: Van Gorcum; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2006), Part II, 348–349.

479 Yeivin, 74–76, 148–152. See also Mantel, "Causes," 48.

480 בשבעה עשר ביה אתנשילו רומאי מיהודה ומירושלם. See Noam, 90–92 (text), 229–231 (discussion). See also Vered Noam, "The Seventeenth of Elul in *Megillat Ta'anit*," *Zion* 59 (1993–94): 433–44 [in Hebrew]; Eliezer Paltiel, "The Covenant with Arhumu in Midrash Shir ha-Shirim," *Sidra* 15 (1999): 119–138 [in Hebrew].

481 Hampel, 152, lists the different amendments to Roman (=רומאי).

482 Ibid. Scholars based on *JW* 11, 449–456 argued that the day should be connected to an event during the Great Revolt, the agreement between Eleazar and Metilius allowing the Roman besieged soldiers to leave the city. The agreement was violated and the rebels killed the Roman soldiers. Zeitlin, on the other hand, related the day to *JW*, 11, 433–438, in which Agrippa's soldiers left the citadel according to an agreement with Menahem

In his discussion of this source, Yeivin noted that there was no connection between the memorial day mentioned in the Megilla and the event recounted in the Scholion. Nevertheless, in his opinion, the Scholion indicates that its composers had found a link between the memorial day and the decrees of Hadrian. The reference was to the beginning of the Second Revolt, when the Jewish fighters had achieved their initial successes and evacuated the foreign residents from the city.⁴⁸³

b. The twenty-second day

On the third of Kislev: the ensigns were removed from the Court.⁴⁸⁴

Yeivin regarded the Megilla and Scholion references to this date as testimony for the conquest of the military camp of Legio x Fretensis, which was stationed in Jerusalem.⁴⁸⁵ In his interpretation of the text, he preferred the version **קרתא** (meaning city)⁴⁸⁶ to that of **דרתא** (meaning courtyard, which was identified with the Azara).⁴⁸⁷ Even though there is no conformity in this source between the Megilla and the Scholion, Yeivin thought of this as testimony to the conquest of Jerusalem over the Romans, which resulted in the removal of the legion's ensigns from the city.⁴⁸⁸

The scholars who discussed this memorial day once again raised its relation to the events that preceded the destruction of the Temple. They linked the day with events from the period of the Hasmonaean revolt when Judah the

the Galilean. See Solomon Zeitlin, *Megillat Ta'anit as a Source for Jewish Chronology and History in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods* (Philadelphia: 1922), 94–96.

483 Yeivin, 150, 174. Kraus, on the contrary, argued that the day is related to the Jewish Diaspora revolt in the days of Trajan. See *Revue des Études Juives* 30 (1895): 41–42. Applebaum, "Judaea as Roman Province," 395, linked the Scholion to the situation in Judaea on the eve of the Second Revolt.

484 "בכיסלו אתנטילו סימאותא מן דרתא" Noam, (above, note 478), 98–99 (text), 255–259.

485 Yeivin, 75–76, 150–151.

486 On the changing of the version *Darta* to *Karta*, see Frankel, "Die Juden unter den ersten römischen Kaisern," *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* 3 (1854): 444, note 94.

487 For the different interpretations of *Darta*, see Zeitlin, (above, note 482), 67, translated to *Temple Court*. Lichtenstein Tempelvorhof, Temple Yard or the Azara, see Hans Lichtenstein, "Die Fastenrolle Untersuchung zur Jüdisch-Hellenistischen Geschichte," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 8–9 (1932): 299.

488 See above, note 485.

Maccabee and his brothers purified the Temple courtyard before the dedication of the Temple.⁴⁸⁹ Those who dated it to a later time linked it with the events that occurred during the period of Pontius Pilate and with his attempts to set up the army ensigns and flags in Jerusalem.⁴⁹⁰ Yeivin rejected both interpretations, and in reference to the those who dated it later, he claimed that “if we review the memorial days in the Megilla we will see that they were all ordained to commemorate decisive events, whether for religious or political reasons; it is therefore difficult to assume that an event such as the removal of the ensigns during the Pontius Pilate period would have deserved to be among the memorial listings in Megillat Ta’anit.”⁴⁹¹ Yeivin’s estimation that the event was not significant enough to be commemorated is surprising in view of the descriptions in Josephus of the reactions of the people and their stubborn struggle to remove the ensigns from the city. Should not this event be considered worthy of memorializing from a purely religious aspect or from a political one?⁴⁹²

c. The thirty-fourth day:

On the sixteenth of Adar: thereof was begun the building of the wall of Jerusalem; it is forbidden to mourn thereon.⁴⁹³

According to Yeivin, after the expulsion of the Tenth Legion from the city, the Jews began working on the fortification of Jerusalem in order to prepare it to function as a political—as well as a strategic—center. He attributed the aforementioned memorial day to this event.⁴⁹⁴ It is difficult to accept this determination by Yeivin because the building of the walls of Jerusalem is mentioned twice more: on the seventeenth of Iyar and on the fourth of Elul.⁴⁹⁵ His reasoning for choosing the sixteenth of Adar as the memorial day for the recon-

489 Hampel, 167.

490 Hampel, 167–168; see Schäfer, 70–80. On the attempts of Pontius Pilate, see *JA* 18: 55–59; *JW* 2: 147–169, Philo, *Legatio ad Gaium*, 299–305. For a summarizing article on this topic, see Daniel R. Schwartz, “Josephus and Philo on Pontius Pilate,” *Jerusalem Cathedra* 3 (1983): 26–45.

491 Yeivin, 151.

492 Schäfer, 80–81, criticized mainly the interconnection between the above, two sources and between them and the fact that the city was conquered by the rebels.

493 "בשיתת עשר ביה שריאו למבני שור ירוש' ולא למספד" Noam, 121 (text), 135 (discussion).

494 Yeivin, 86, 151–152.

495 7th of Iyar, the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, Noam, 63–64, 180–183. And, 4th of Elul, the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, Noam, 88–90, 226–228.

struction of the city ruined during the Bar Kokhba period is not convincing at all. Other scholars have tried to link this date with various events, mainly the events that preceded the destruction of the Temple, during periods in which Judah enjoyed political independence.⁴⁹⁶

The attempt by Yeivin to link the three memorial days to the period of the Bar Kokhba revolt, especially in relation to the conquest of Jerusalem by the rebels, is not convincing because of the prior argument presented.⁴⁹⁷ But most importantly, because of the fact that there is a tendency in Talmudic literature written long after the destruction of the Second Temple to annul the memorial days appearing in *Megillat Ta'anit*, with the exception of festivities associated with Hannuka and Purim. This fact renders it difficult to suppose that new memorial days would have been ordained in such circumstances.⁴⁹⁸

Coins of the Second Revolt

Most of the scholars who claimed that the rebels conquered Jerusalem and controlled it during the early years of the revolt based their opinion on the coin finds of the Bar Kokhba revolt, especially those that bore the name **ירושלים** (Jerusalem) or the inscription **לחירות ירושלים** (for the liberation of Jerusalem). These inscriptions were interpreted in the research literature to have two possible meanings. Some scholars claimed that they should be understood literally, i.e., as proof of the conquest of Jerusalem by the rebels,⁴⁹⁹ while others claimed that the inscriptions were merely slogans and hopes for the liberation of the city.⁵⁰⁰

According to these inscriptions, the first group of scholars inferred that after Jerusalem was conquered, the rebels began to use a new calendar dating system. The city was under rebel control; the name *Jerusalem* indicated the place where the coins were minted or where the minting authority resided, and all the coins of the revolt were minted in Jerusalem. Some even went so far as

496 Hampel, 120–122, 195–196. The various possible identification of the three days starting with the building and dedication of the walls of Jerusalem by Nehemiah (*Nehemiah* 3), continuing with their building and strengthening in the days of Jonathan (1 *Macc.* 10:11, 12: 36) and Simon the Hasmoneans (1 *Macc* 13:10, 14: 37), Agrippa I (JA 19: 326), and ending with the strengthening of the city wall after the defeat of Cestius Gallus (JW 2 569).

497 Schäfer, 78–81.

498 See Hampel, 80, 90, 92. See also TJ, Ta'anit, 2:13, 66a.

499 See Alon, *History*, vol. 11, 31–32; Abramsky, 87–90; Oppenheimer, "Bar Kokhba Revolt," 60–61; Kanael, "Notes on the Dates," 39–46. Kindler, "Coins of the Bar Kokhba War," 175–176; Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, 63; Yeivin, 80–86.

500 Leo Mildenberg, "The Eleazar Coins of the Bar Kochba Rebellion," *Historia Judaica*, 11 (1949): 90–94; idem, "Bar Kochba in Jerusalem," *Schweizer Münzenblätter* 27 (1977): 1–6.

to claim that the coins, which had been impressed with an image of the holy sanctuary and with other symbols, indicated that the rebels had renewed the sacrificial cults and hoped for the reconstruction of the Temple.⁵⁰¹ The other scholars, who interpreted the inscription *for the liberation of Jerusalem* as a slogan or a call to battle that the leaders announced in the third year of the revolt, thought that this coin was minted after the Romans had conquered the city from the rebels who had controlled it for about two years.⁵⁰²

Before discussing the coins, from which one might supposedly infer Jewish control over Jerusalem during the course of the revolt, it is worth noting first a fact that places a big question mark over most of the conclusions made by the aforementioned scholars: the coins on which they based their conclusions were not found in Jerusalem. Barag, who mapped the area in which the coins of the Second Revolt were found, stated that the Bar Kokhba coin finds extended over the mountainous regions in the northwest and northeast of Jerusalem, to the southeast and southwest of Jerusalem, in the area between Bethlehem and Hebron, and along the western shores of the Dead Sea.⁵⁰³ As for Jerusalem, throughout the long years of organized excavations in the city, only a few



FIGURE 2.16 Obv. Bunch of Grapes, around it inscription: *Shimon Rev. Lulav* (palm-branches) around it inscription: *Liberation of Jerusalem*.

⁵⁰¹ See, for example, Luria (above, note 469).

⁵⁰² Kindler, "Coins of the Bar Kokhba War," 176.

⁵⁰³ Dan Barag, "A Note on the Geographical Distribution of Bar Kokhba Coins," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 4 (1980): 30–33; on page 31, the map of the coin's distribution.

coins of the Second Revolt were found there.⁵⁰⁴ The wealth of Second Revolt coins that were found in the aforementioned locations overshadows the poor finds from Jerusalem and obliges us to reexamine the main claims of scholars regarding the conquest of Jerusalem by the rebels and their control over it.⁵⁰⁵

During the three years of the revolt, coins were minted with many and varied kinds of inscriptions. These coins can be divided into three groups, according to their inscriptions:

1. Coins of the first year of the revolt; the inscription on the back of the coins indicates the date of the minting, *Year One of the Redemption of Israel*.⁵⁰⁶
2. Coins of the second year of the revolt; the inscription on the back of the coins appears in an abbreviated form: שׁב לחר ישראל = *Year Two of the Freedom of Israel*.⁵⁰⁷
3. A group of coins without any inscribed date; on the back of the coins appears the inscription *For the Liberation of Jerusalem*.⁵⁰⁸

In all three groups, the following names appear on the coins: *Jerusalem*, *Eleazar the Priest*, *Simeon*. Perhaps the third group, carrying the inscription *For the Liberation of Jerusalem* without a date, is of most importance to my discussion—along with the name *Jerusalem* being mentioned in all three groups.⁵⁰⁹

Scholars who regarded the dates on the coins of the Second Revolt as slogans that the rebels had adopted during its early stages tried to determine the

504 Nachman Avigad, "Archaeological Discoveries in the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem," *Israel Museum* (Jerusalem, 1976): 24; Benjamin Mazar, *The Excavations in the Old City of Jerusalem near the Temple Mount: Preliminary Report of the Second and Third Seasons, 1969–1970* (Jerusalem: Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University, 1971), 8; pl. xxvii: 10; see Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 83, note 241, in which he mentions a second coin. See also Donald T. Ariel, "A Survey of Coin Finds in Jerusalem until the End of the Byzantine Period," *Liber Annuus, Studii biblici franciscani* 32 (1981): 292–293.

505 See Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 27; Mildenberg, "Coins and Documents," 320; Schäfer, 87–88.

506 Kindler, *Coins of the Land of Israel*, 70–73, nos. 81–91; Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, 118–120, nos. 165–175.

507 Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, 120–124, nos. 120–124; Kindler, *Coins of the Land of Israel*, 76–80, nos. 97–109.

508 Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, 124–127, no. 1; 199–215; Kindler, *Coins of the Land of Israel*, 83–92, nos. 83–142.

509 Coins with the name *Jerusalem*: **First Year**—Meshorer, nos. 168, 175; Kindler, nos. 82, 83. **Second Year**—Meshorer, nos. 178–180, 191, 198; Kindler, no. 109. **No Date**—Meshorer, no. 214; Kindler, nos. 141, 142.

date for the inscription *For the Liberation of Jerusalem*. But both those who give an early date for the coin minting and those who date it later based their claims on the fact that Jerusalem was conquered by the Bar Kokhba fighters.⁵¹⁰

Yeivin claimed that all three groups were minted after the conquest of Jerusalem by the rebels, in Kislev 132 CE. In his opinion, the Roman coins on which the rebels had overstruck their coins, originated from the treasury of Legio x Fretensis, which had been expelled from the city by the rebels in the course of their conquest.⁵¹¹ Yeivin thought that the coins with the inscription *For the Liberation of Jerusalem* were the first ones that were minted by the rebels. He viewed them as memorial coins minted a short while after the liberation of Jerusalem, at the time when Simeon Bar Kokhba and Eleazar the Priest were appointed. In addition, the rebels began minting coins in a series that bore the inscription: *Year One of the Redemption of Israel*, i.e., "At first redemption and liberation from foreign oppression, and after they had been liberated they became free men, and from then onwards the dating reverted to the liberation of Israel."⁵¹² According to Yeivin, the minting ceased at the end of the second year of the revolt, even though the rebels continued their hold on the city for another year, until May 135 CE. In his opinion, the minting was stopped because of the absence of the minting authority in Judaea. He was therefore willing to attribute the coins without a date and with the inscription *For the Liberation of Jerusalem* and the name *Jerusalem* to the third year of the war as well.⁵¹³ Other scholars brought forward the minting date of the coins *For the Liberation of Jerusalem*. In their view, the inscription indicates that the coin was minted before the conquest of Jerusalem. The inscription served as a slogan for the rebels, and when they achieved their goal, they minted in the second year the coins that bore the inscription *Year One of the Redemption of Israel* and in the third year, *Year Two of the Freedom of Israel*.⁵¹⁴

⁵¹⁰ Above, note 469.

⁵¹¹ Yeivin, 76, 85. Indeed, among the coins of the revolt there are coins with countermarks of Legio x Fretensis. See Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, 67, 127, nos. 211B, 211C. However, in light of my discussion above, about the resources for the rebels' minting (above, 207–208), Yeivin's conclusions are not acceptable.

⁵¹² Yeivin, 83–84.

⁵¹³ Yeivin, 100–101. A proof against Yeivin's claim that during the third year of the revolt, Jerusalem was lacking a minting authority are the coins without a date, with the inscription *Simeon* or *Elazar the Priest*. The name of the latter symbolizes, according to Yeivin, the minting authority during the first two years of the revolt. See Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, nos. 199–211, 213, 215; Kindler, *Coins of the Land of Israel*, nos. 116–140.

⁵¹⁴ Kindler, "Bar Kokhba Coins," 176.

Those who assigned the coin *For the Liberation of Jerusalem* to a later date claimed that in each year the rebels changed the slogan of the revolt.⁵¹⁵ Because the rebels had conquered Jerusalem and held it for the first two years of the revolt, the slogan of the revolt was for the redemption and freedom of Israel. When the city was regained by the Romans, the coins of the third year with the inscription *For the Liberation of Jerusalem* became the slogan of the rebels, or in the words of Kindler, “a battle cry with the aim of regaining the liberation of Jerusalem.”⁵¹⁶

The name *Jerusalem* appears in all three groups mentioned above. Scholars claimed that this is evidence that the Jews minted their coins in Jerusalem while they were in control of the city or that the name here is of one of the minting authorities.⁵¹⁷ Mildenberg rejected most of the conclusions of those scholars, even though he also thought that the name *Jerusalem* on the coins is a war slogan.⁵¹⁸

The words of Kindler help to resolve the evidence of the coins concerning the question of the conquest of Jerusalem by the rebels, “as it appears from the discoveries in Wadi Murabba’at, these inscriptions do not have any abstract meanings and are not merely propaganda formulations. They transmit the actual date that was customary during the Bar Kokhba revolt, and it seems that this conclusion can also be applied to the dates on the coins of the war of the Jews.”⁵¹⁹ If the dates mentioned in the Murabba’at documents can serve as the real date for the course of the revolt, why cannot this protocol apply to the coins as well? During the four years of the revolt, it was the custom to date the Murabba’at letters according to the date *לגאולת ישראל* and the additional date of *לחירות ירושלים*.⁵²⁰ I believe it was also the custom to use certain

⁵¹⁵ Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, 63.

⁵¹⁶ Kindler, “Bar Kokhba Coins,” 176. Adolph Reifenberg, *Ancient Jewish Coins* (Jerusalem: R. Mass, 1948), 31.

⁵¹⁷ Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 615–616. From his point of view, Jerusalem was the minting authority, since it was the highest governmental authority . . . representing the most popular democratic platform of the constitution of the highest government of this period. See also Yeivin, 83–84; Kindler, “Bar Kokhba Coins,” 83–84.

⁵¹⁸ For a summary of Mildenberg’s research, see his article “Coins and Documents” and his book *The Coinage of Bar Kokhba War*. See also Behrendt Pick, “Contribution to Palestine Numismatics,” *Numismatic Review* 8 (1945): 6–11.

⁵¹⁹ Kindler, “Bar Kokhba Coins,” 176.

⁵²⁰ For the various dates used in the letters from the Judean Desert, see **Year one of the redemption of Israel in the days of Shim’on son of Kosiba Premier of Israel**—*JDS*, 111, 44, P. Yadin, 42.

Year one of the redemption of Israel—*DJD* 11, 118, no. 22. 121, no. 23.

dates for the coins: **לגאולת ישראל, לחירות ישראל, לחירות ירושלים**. The dates on those coins reflect undoubtedly the coins minted during the Great Revolt,⁵²¹ and one should not ascribe to them any slogans, whether abstract or concrete, such as a 'battle cry', as Kindler defined one of them.⁵²²

One of the coins of year two (on which the inscription was usually *For the Freedom of Israel*) attests to the unsystematic use of the various dates in the letters and coins: there is one coin that has the inscription **לחירות ירושלים** (For the Liberation of Jerusalem), and on the obverse **שבלחר ישראל (!)** (Year Two for the Freedom of Israel).⁵²³ This coin raises a number of difficulties both for the early and for the late daters of the coin. *For the Liberation of Jerusalem* usually appears on the coins without a date. The unsystematic use of the dates is even more noticeable in the letters of the first year of the revolt, in which the date is *For the Redemption of Israel* and also *For the Freedom*. . . . The letters of the third year once again exhibit double dating: **לחירות ירושלים** and **לגאולת ישראל** (*For the Redemption of Israel* and *For the Liberation of Jerusalem*).⁵²⁴

I believe that the inscriptions on the coins and the various dates in the letters are merely dates, and they have no further significance. They should not be regarded as evidence for the conquest of Jerusalem and its control by the Jewish fighters in the city. Moreover, if the rebels had controlled the city for at least two years, and all the coins of the revolt were minted in Jerusalem, it seems reasonable to suppose that archaeologists would have found a wealth of Second Revolt coins in the city. But, as stated above, coin finds in the city were deficient to support that scenario and indicate the possibility that the rebels never conquered the city and certainly did not control it for two years.

Recently, Yehoshua Zlotnik coped with the question of the conquest of Jerusalem by the rebels from a different numismatic viewpoint. He asserted that one should view the few coins of the Bar Kokhba revolt found in Jerusalem

Year two of the redemption of Israel—*DSD* 27, 121–122, XHev/Se49; *DJD* II, 140–143, no. 29.

Year two of the redemption of Israel by Shim'on son of Kosiba Prince of Israel—*DJD* II, p. 123–134, nos. 24A, B, C, D, E, F, G, K.

Year three of the freedom of Israel—*DSD* 27, p. 21, XHev/Se7, 27–28, XHev/Se8. p. 36, XHev/Se8a, p. 67 XHev/Se13.

Year three of the freedom of Jerusalem—*DJD* II, 135–136, no. 25 J. Allegro, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, (Harmondsworth, Middx 1956), 176.

Year three of Shim'on son of Kosiba Premier of Israel—*JDS*, III p. 44, P. Yadin 44, p. 58, P. Yadin 45, p. 66, P. Yadin 46, p. 162. P. Yadin, 47; See Hanan Eshel, "The Dates Used during the Bar Kokhba Revolt," *Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered*, 93–105.

521 Kindler, "Bar Kokhba Coins," 165.

522 Kindler, "Bar Kokhba Coins," 176.

523 Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, 123, no. 194.

524 See above, note 520.

in light of the poor finds of Roman coins of Aelia Capitolina during the reign of Hadrian. He contended that the paucity of the Bar Kokhba finds do not constitute evidence for the non-conquest of Jerusalem by the rebels. If Jerusalem had not been conquered by the rebels, then Aelia Capitolina should have been an economically flourishing city with many coins minted in it. But the poor finds of coins of the Hadrian period that were found in the city indicate a different situation. According to Zlotnik, even if Jerusalem were not conquered by the rebels, it was a city that was isolated and surrounded on all sides by settlements under rebel control. This means the city would have been under siege and its inhabitants did not have any economic contacts with the surrounding settlements. According to his opinion, the cause for the revolt was the transformation of Jerusalem into a Roman *colony* on half of the area of the city that was destroyed during the days of Titus and the erection of a temple to Jupiter. He therefore concluded that the city was conquered by the rebels despite the limited finds of Bar Kokhba coins and limited sources describing activities in the city during the two years they controlled it. In the year 134/135, the Romans reconquered the city held by the rebels that was once again destroyed after the siege of Hadrian. The city was reestablished in a Pomerium ceremony.

In spite of the interesting reconstruction of Zlotnik and his claim that the small numbers of Bar Kokhba coins found in Jerusalem was not as significant as researchers had previously thought, he concluded that it is not possible today to decide the question of whether Jerusalem was indeed conquered by the rebels.⁵²⁵

Foundation Coins

In addition to this discussion of the coins of the revolt, it is important also to examine the foundation coins of Aelia Capitolina, even though they were not Jewish coins. On the basis of the evidence supplied by the foundation coins, Meyshan, who assumed that Jerusalem had been under rebel control, discussed the question of which legion had conquered the city from the rebels.⁵²⁶ On a foundation coin of Aelia Capitolina minted by Hadrian, appears the inscription *LE V* (*legio quinta*), which Meyshan identified with Legio v Macedonica. There is evidence in an inscription in Bethar that this

525 Yehoshua Zlotnik, "Coin Finds and the Question of the Conquest of Jerusalem by Bar Kokhba," *Israel Numismatic Research* 3 (2008): 137–146.

526 Josef Meyshan, "The Legion Which Reconquered Jerusalem in the War of Bar Kokhba (AD 132–135)?," *Essays in Jewish Numismatics* (Jerusalem: Israel Numismatic Society, 1968): 143–150.

legion took part in the suppression of the revolt.⁵²⁷ According to Meyshan, the Fifth Legion conquered Jerusalem from the rebels who controlled the city after having expelled the Tenth Legion, *x Fretensis*, from it. In tribute to the legion for its exploits, Hadrian minted the emblem of the legion on the first foundation coins of the new city, Aelia Capitolina, and veterans of Legio v Macedonica were among the first settlers in the city.⁵²⁸ Contrary to Meyshan, Applebaum claimed that the inscription *LEG V* was corrupt and it should have read *LEG X*,⁵²⁹ which was a frequent inscription among the foundation coins of Aelia Capitolina. He argued that the *Legio x Fretensis* was stationed in the city since the year 70 CE, and its soldiers constituted the core group of settlers in the new city.⁵³⁰ Applebaum dismissed the assumptions of Meyshan and Zlotnik that it was the Fifth Legion that had conquered Jerusalem from the rebels, as well as the assumption that the city had been in the hands of the rebels at all. The foundation coins with the mark of *Legio x Fretensis* are the most commonly found and do not indicate any irregular events in Jerusalem during the course of the Second Revolt.

The Dead Sea Scrolls

The name *Jerusalem*, which was also found among the letters from the Judean Desert, was used as proof that the city had been under the control of the Jewish rebels.

1. Mur. 29:⁵³¹

Recto

1—On the 10 [+3+] 1 of Elul, year two to the redemption of Israel in [·]
אלים [·] Klepos son of Eutrapelos [·] sold to [·] לים to El[azar] son of
Zakariah son [·] to l [] and to Sam'ah.

527 See Germer-Durand, *Revue Biblique*, 3 (1894), 614; Charles Clermont-Ganneau, *Archaeological Researches in Palestine during the Years 1873–74*, trans. Aubrey Stewart (London: Published for the Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund, 1899), 263–270.

528 Meyshan (above, note 59), 147–150; Smallwood, 460, note 129. See Leo Kadman, *The Coins of Aelia Capitolina* (Jerusalem: Universitas 1956), no. 1; Baruch Lifshitz, “Jerusalem sous la domination romaine,” *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* 11, 8 (1977): 483–484; Zlotnik (above, note 525), 141.

529 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 83, note 243. Against Meyshan's reading, see also Isaac, “Roman Colonies,” in 102, note 77, and 247, note 101. Yakov Meshorer, *The Coinage of Aelia Capitolina*, (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum 1989), 21, adapted the reading LXF.

530 Isaac, *ibid.*, 10.2.

531 Mur. 29: לים. בר אטרפלוס. לים. [·] לאלול שנת שנים לגאלת ישראל ב. אלים מכר קלבוס בר אטרפלוס. לים. [·] לאלעזר בר זכריה בארבעה עשר לאלול שנת שנים לגאלת ישראל ב. אלים

11—On the 14 of Elul, year two to the redemption of Israel in [אלים] signed by Yehonatan son of Joseph, Simeon son of Saabai, Yehudah son of Yehudah, Simeon son of Zakariah, Klepos son of Eutrapelos to El[azar] son of Zakariah son and Sam'ah of Yohanana.

2. Mur. 30:⁵³²

Recto

1—On the twenty first of Ti[shri, year four to the redemption of Israel in אלים] Dosthos son of Elazar son a ... lon l-l []

11—On the twenty first of Tishri year four to the redemption of Israel in אלים]

Both letters mentioned sales transactions conducted at a place for which only the final letters of the name אלים... remain. Milik completed the name as אלים יר(ו) and identified it with the desert of Jeruel between Ein Gedi and Tekoa.⁵³³ This identification corresponds to the area and place names mentioned in other letters. In addition to the letters, Milik suggested a different reading and completed the name of the place as אלים יר(ו)שלים, which means that both transactions were conducted in Jerusalem.⁵³⁴

3. Mur. 25:⁵³⁵

[In Marheshvan Year] Three for the Freedom of אלים{רונ}

4. Mur. 22:

On the fourteenth of Marheshvan Year Four for the Redemption of Israel

According to some scholars, the four letters constitute evidence for the control of Jerusalem by the rebels. Above, I cited scholars who interpreted the inscription on the coins of the revolt *For the Liberation of Jerusalem*, as an abstract slogan. As for the letters with the same inscription, which were concerned with matters of selling and buying should the inscriptions be understood literally? which means that the rebels were in control of the city.⁵³⁶ They found support for this claim in Letters 1 and 2, from which Milik inferred that the rebels

532 Mur. 30: בר אלעזר בר דוסתם בר אלים מכר דוסתם בר אלעזר בר ... ב 21 לתשרי שנת ארבע לגאולת ישראל ב. אלים מכר דוסתם בר אלעזר בר ... ב 21 לתשרי שנת ארבע לגאולת ישראל ב.

533 Ibid., 143. Jeruel desert is mentioned in 2 Chronicles, 20:16.

534 Ibid., 205.

535 למרחשון שנת] תלת לחרות ירושלים.

536 See, for example, Abramski, 90.

controlled Jerusalem in the second, third, and fourth year of the revolt.⁵³⁷ On the basis on the letters mentioned above, Milik, who dated the beginning of the revolt to September 2, 131 CE, claimed that the rebels controlled Jerusalem during the years 132–134 CE.⁵³⁸ However, Milik's dating of the beginning of the revolt was rejected by many scholars who preferred to date it to the beginning of September 132 CE and letters, to the years 134–135 CE.⁵³⁹

The claim of the scholars that the rebels held Jerusalem during the years 132–135 CE becomes impossible in light of the two dates proposed for the beginning of the revolt, the dates mentioned in letters 1 to 3, and the various stages of the revolt. During the winter of 132–133 CE, Julius Severus set out on his journey to Judaea and suppressed the revolt during the years 133–135 CE.⁵⁴⁰ If Jerusalem was regained by the Romans from the rebels, this act must have been carried out during those years. Indeed, the scholars who are of the opinion that Jerusalem was held by the rebels alleged that the Jews controlled the city during the first two years of the revolt and dated its reconquest by the Romans to the autumn of 134 CE.⁵⁴¹ Therefore, the sales agreement in letter 1, which is dated to October 135, could not have been conducted in Jerusalem at that time since the city was already in Roman hands by the previous year.⁵⁴²

Milik himself admitted that the *shin* in his reading of the word as *Jerusalem* is uncertain,⁵⁴³ and thus his first reading was preferable. One should therefore read the name of the place where the sales agreement was conducted as *Jeruelim*, which Milik identified as the Desert of Jeruel. It may be, as Wacholder suggested, that the contract was drawn up in a distant settlement in which the local scribe continued to draw up contracts and to use the date *For the Redemption of Israel* as he had done during the revolt, even after its

537 Elisabeth Koffmahn, *Die Doppelurkunden aus der Wüste Juda*, Leiden, *DJD*, 11, 205, 1968, 187.

538 *DJD*, 11, 135.

539 See Manfred R. Lehmann, "Studies in the Murabba'at and Nahal Hever Documents," *Revue de Qumran* 4 (1963/64), p. 56. His dates for the letters are No. 22—Oct./Nov. 132; No. 23—Jan./Feb.; No. 29—August/September 134; No. 30—September/October 135.

540 On the dates for the arrival of Severus in Judaea, see below, 264–267.

541 See Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 616; Yeivin, 198–199, fourth Appendix. He dates the conquest of Jerusalem by the rebels to third of Kislev 132, and the recapture of the Romans to the end of autumn 134. See also Zlotnik (above, note 525).

542 Koffmahn (above, note 537): 178 argued that the rebels still held the city on September/October 135.

543 *DJD*, 11, p. 205.

suppression.⁵⁴⁴ All this establishes that one cannot determine from letters 1 to 3 that Jerusalem was under the control of the rebels. This conclusion, which I arrived at when I published my Hebrew book on this subject, was compatible with the information related to the letters available to researchers in the year 1991. This was despite the fact that a number of scholars continue to read the word ירושלים in the letters and to contend that the rebels had controlled the city.⁵⁴⁵

Since that year, Eshel and other scholars have rejected the possibility that these letters (1–4) were connected at all with the Second Revolt. Their main conclusion was that in Documents 22, 25, 29, and 30 from Wadi Murabba'at, the name *Shimon ben Kosiba* was not mentioned in the date formula, and therefore one should examine the possibility that those documents belonged to the Great Revolt for the years 68–69 CE. In their opinion, refugees from the region of Jerusalem fled to Wadi Murabba'at at the end of the Second Temple period, and the four documents mentioned above are from the period of the Great Revolt. This hypothesis gained strength after the carbon-14 tests for Documents 22 and 29 confirmed them as being from that period and that they should be dated to the days of the Great Revolt. Documents 22, 25, 29, and 30 were written during the Great Revolt, and therefore one cannot infer from them that Jerusalem fell into the hands of the rebels during the Bar Kokhba revolt or that the Second Revolt continued until after the festival of Succot in the year 135 CE.⁵⁴⁶

544 See Ben Zion Wacholder, "The Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles during the Second Temple and the Early Rabbinic Period," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 44 (1973): 179, note 96. See also Schäfer, 119.

545 Ada Yardeni, *Aramaic and Hebrew Documents in Cursive Script from Wadi Murabba'at and NahalHever, and Related Material* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1991), 43–47 [in Hebrew]. See also Hagai Misgav, "Jewish Courts of Law as Reflected in Documents from the Dead Sea," *Cathedra* 82 (1996): 19–20 [in Hebrew]. He linked the documents to the Second Revolt.

546 Hanan Eshel, "Jerusalem in the Documents Found in Cave 4 in Qumran," *New Studies on Jerusalem*, 1 (1995): 64–72; Hanan Eshel, Magen Broshi, Timothy A. Jull, "Documents from Wadi Mura'abat and the Status of Jerusalem During the War," *Refuge Caves 1*, 233–239 [in Hebrew]. Idem, "Four Murabba'at Papyri and the Alleged Capture of Jerusalem by Bar Kokhba," in *Law in the Documents of the Judaean Desert*, eds. Ranon Katzoff, David Schaps (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 45–50. This article was published again in English: Hanan Eshel, "Documents of the First Jewish Revolt from the Judean Desert," in *The First Jewish Revolt, Archaeology, History, and Ideology*, eds. Andrea M. Berlin, Andrew J. Overman (London: Routledge, 2002), 157–163. Michael O. Wise "Murabba'at and the First Revolt," in *Peshet Nahum: Texts and Studies in Jewish History and Literature from Antiquity through the Middle Ages, Presented to Norman Golb*, eds. Joel L. Kraemer, et al. (Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2012), 301–303.

In an article published in 1999, based on a lecture delivered a year earlier at the University of Reading,⁵⁴⁷ Cotton dealt—among other things—with the dating of papyri numbers 29 and 30 on the basis of linguistic references. She reached the conclusion that they should be dated to the years of the Great Revolt. She also quoted the article by Eshel, Broshi, and Jull in which they arrived at a similar conclusion from other directions.⁵⁴⁸ In that same year, she published another article.⁵⁴⁹ Cotton knew that the aforementioned papyri should be dated to the days of the Great Revolt, as she indicated in a footnote: “the alternative is to take the date in Mur 29 and 30 as referring to the first revolt . . .” And yet, she continued to connect it to and date it with the letters of the Bar Kokhba revolt: “The implications seem to be inescapable: Jerusalem recognized the Authority of a Jewish State as late as Sept/Oct. 135.”

Moreover, in her view, these letters were additional evidence for postponing the traditional date for the fall of Bethar from July 135 to a date after December 135, as Eck had suggested on the basis of other evidence.⁵⁵⁰ In note 35 of the article, she stated that her view is opposed to my assumption in my Hebrew book, and drew the attention of the reader to the footnote in which I claimed, on the basis of the dates of Atkinson and Stern, that Julius Severus arrived in Judaea in May 134 CE. And in parentheses, she noted that perhaps Provincia Judaea had already been converted into *Syria-Palaestina*. This does not conform with her own views, since she thought, just as Eck did, that the name of the province was one of the punitive measures of Hadrian at the end of the revolt,⁵⁵¹ and therefore it should not be connected with the date when Severus arrived in the province.

In order to support her criticism, she referred the reader to a book in which Anthony Birley discussed the career of Julius Severus.⁵⁵² In a later book, in

547 Hannah M. Cotton, “The Language of the Legal and Administrative Documents from the Judean Desert,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 125 (1999): 219–231. See her opening note: “This is a revised version of a paper originally delivered at the conference on Aspects of Bilingualism in the Ancient World, held at Reading University, 2–4 April 1998.”

548 Ibid., 221–223, and Note 17.

549 Cotton, “Documentary Papyri,” 221–236. This time she preferred to include it among the proceedings of a conference that was held in March 1997.

550 Eck, “Bar Kokhba Revolt,” 76–89; Werner Eck, Gideon Foerster, “Ein Triumphbogen für Hadrian im Tal von Beth Shean bei Tel Shalem,” *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 12 (1999): 294–313.

551 Ibid.

552 Anthony R. Birley, *The Fasti of Roman Britain*, Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 106–109. It is worthwhile mentioning that the name of the author is Anthony Richard and not Arthur R., as Cotton cited.

which he discussed the career of Julius Severus in Britain during the years 131–133, he wrote: “His departure from there to take command against the Jewish insurgents led by Bar Kokhba is recorded by Dio . . . The outbreak of the Jewish rebellion may be dated to 132, but it could well have been one or two years before Hadrian decided that only his foremost general could defeat the rebels. His stay at Britain was certainly curtailed but could have lasted for two years, from 131 or 132 to 133 or 134.” However, in note 146, he referred to the English edition of Schürer and the *Prolegomena* of Applebaum, which date the arrival of Severus in the province to the year 134 CE. He also noted that perhaps among the forces that he brought with him as reinforcement one might also include Legio IX Hispana.⁵⁵³ In view of the dating suggested by Birley, the date that I proposed for the transfer of Severus to Judaea is highly probable.

In a 2003 publication, Cotton admitted frankly that the four letters had no connection at all to the Second Revolt and that therefore her criticism that I had rejected the letters as evidence for the Second Revolt was misplaced. However, I rejected the letters on a completely different basis.⁵⁵⁴

Non-Jewish Sources:

Appianus, *Syrian Wars*, 8:50:

The Jewish nation still resisted, and Pompey conquered them, sent their king, Aristobulus, to Rome, and destroyed their greatest, and to them holiest, city, Jerusalem, as Ptolemy, the first king of Egypt, had formerly done. It was afterward rebuilt and Vespasian destroyed it again, and Hadrian did the same in my time.⁵⁵⁵

Appianus of Alexandria, in the second century, described the conquest of Jerusalem and its destruction by Pompey, and noted that the city was destroyed another three times, by Ptolemy I, Vespasian, and Hadrian. The destruction of Jerusalem by Hadrian was interpreted as a sign that the emperor was forced to conquer the city from the Jewish rebels and afterwards destroyed it because if

553 Anthony R. Birley, *The Roman Government in Britain* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 129–131. Schürer, 529; Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 25. (above, note 82).

554 Cotton, “Documentary Papyri,” 36, note 12. Here again, she is misspelling a name: my name is *Mor* and not *Mohr*!

555 Appianus of Alexandria, *Historia Romana*, English & Greek, translated by Horace White (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962).

this was not so, what was the point of destroying the city?⁵⁵⁶ An examination of this source shows that Appianus was not accurate in the details. Neither Ptolemy I nor Pompey destroyed Jerusalem, and the destroyer of the city during the Great Revolt was not Vespasian but Titus.⁵⁵⁷ These inaccuracies undermine the reliability of Appianus in saying that the city was destroyed by Hadrian. But in spite of these questionable details, Alon, Yeivin, Smallwood, Schürer and others thought that the source was the main evidence that the city had been under the control of the rebels, and that during the course of the suppression of the revolt, Hadrian had conquered it from them.⁵⁵⁸ Schäfer claimed, in agreement with Mildenberg and Bowersock,⁵⁵⁹ that one should not consider the evidence of Appianus as proof for the destruction of the city by Hadrian after he had reconquered it from the rebels. In Schäfer's opinion, the Jews regarded the construction of Aelia Capitolina and the expulsion of the Jewish population from Jerusalem as the destruction of the city. Appianus' words should not be considered as actual proof that the city was in the hands of the Jewish rebels.⁵⁶⁰

Christian Sources

The writings of the church fathers Eusebius and Hieronymus were also cited by scholars as evidence for the fact that Jerusalem was in the hands of Jewish rebels and that it was conquered from them after a siege was laid against it by Hadrian.

1. Eusebius, *Demonstratio Evangelica*, IV, 18, 10:

And not long after, in the reign of Hadrian, there was another Jewish revolution, and the remaining half of the city was again besieged and driven out, so that from that day to this the whole place has not been trodden by them.⁵⁶¹

556 Yeivin, 181.

557 For the capture of Jerusalem by Ptolemy I, see *JA* 12, 6–7; Pompey's siege, see *JA* 14, 249–264. For the destruction of the Temple, see *JW* 6, 249–264.

558 See Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 615; Yeivin, 181; Smallwood, 444; Schürer, I, 545.

559 See Leo Mildenberg, "Bar Kochba in Jerusalem," *Schweizer Münzblätter* 27 (1977): 2–6. See also Glen W. Bowersock, "A Roman Perspective on the Bar Kokhba War," *Approaches to Ancient Judaism*, 11, 136.

560 Schäfer, 82. See also Stern, *Authors*, 11, 179–180.

561 Eusebius of Caesarea, *Demonstratio Evangelica*. Trans. by William John Ferrar (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, New York: Macmillan, 1920), 159.

2. Eusebius, *Demonstratio Evangelica*, II, 3, 86:

In the time of the apostles, and of Vespasian, Emperor of the Romans, being a second time besieged again under Hadrian they were completely debarred from entering the place, so that they were not even allowed to tread the soil of Jerusalem.⁵⁶²

3. Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History (HE)*, XII, 1:

In the time of these men, Narcissus, who is still celebrated among many was well known as of the Church in Jerusalem, holding the fifteenth successive place since the siege of the Jews under Hadrian. And we have already pointed out that then for the first time the Church in Jerusalem was composed of Gentiles, following those of the circumcision, and that of the first bishop from the Gentiles to guide them was Marcus.⁵⁶³

4. Eusebius, *Theophania*, IV, 20:

And, how these things have been fulfilled, many words are not wanted (to shew); because, we can easily see with our own eyes, how the Jews are dispersed into all nations; and, how the inhabitants of that which was formerly Jerusalem—but is now named Aelia by Aelius Hadrian.⁵⁶⁴

5. Eusebius, *Theophania*, IV, 23:

The sentence of judgment therefore, put forth in the Divine enunciation of our Saviour was, That no more, either in Jerusalem, or on Mount Gerizim, should those henceforth worship, who then adhered so pertinaciously to these places: which came to pass soon after. (For), in the days of Titus Vespasian, and in the reduction which happened in those of Hadrian, both these mounts were, according to His words, desolated.⁵⁶⁵

562 Ibid.

563 Eusebius, *The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine*, trans. with introduction by Geoffrey Arthur Williamson (New York: New York University Press, 1965; repr. Barnes and Noble Books, 1995), 214–215.

564 Eusebius, *Theophania*, IV, 20. See Hugo Gressmann, ed. *Studien zu Eusebs Theophanie. Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1903), vol. II, 2, 31, 196.

565 Ibid., 201, 23.

In the opinion of Yeivin, sources 1–3 are evidence for the fact that Hadrian was forced to lay siege against Jerusalem in order to conquer it from the rebels. He destroyed it and only later on rebuilt it.⁵⁶⁶ Schäfer, in his discussion of the above sources, noted that sources 1–2 (taken from the book of Eusebius on the demonstration for the truths of Christianity, written in the years 315–323 CE), state for the first time the fact that Hadrian had besieged Jerusalem and conquered it.⁵⁶⁷ The main subjects of these sources is the expulsion of the Jews from Jerusalem and the prohibition imposed upon them to enter the city after the suppression of the revolt in 135 CE. Therefore, according to Schäfer, the term used by Eusebius to describe the actions of Hadrian does not mean a siege in the military sense, but *Niederwerfung*, i.e., the surrender of the Jews. Schäfer interpreted the expression *siege* in source 3 taken from *Historia Ecclesiastica* in the same manner.⁵⁶⁸ Sources 4–5, taken from *Theophania*, also testify, in the opinion of Yeivin, to the conquest and destruction of Jerusalem during the reign of Hadrian and its reconstruction as a gentile city.⁵⁶⁹ But the main interest of these sources is to describe the fact that the Jews were scattered all around and were not residing in the city, a fact that—in the view of Eusebius—was evidence for the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem. Therefore, one should not regard these sources as proof for the siege of Hadrian against Jewish rebels in Jerusalem.

Hieronymus:

1. *Isaiah* 2:12–17

The Lord has a day in store for all the proud and is exalted. They will be humbled. [...] For every lofty tower and lofty, for all that every fortified wall, for every trading ship [...] will be brought low: And those who ascribe this to the time of Vespasian and Hadrian say that the writing here was completely fulfilled, for no high tower, no most fortified wall, no mightiest navy and not the most diligent commerce, could overcome the might of the Roman army; and the citizens of Judaea came to such distress that they, together with their wives, their children, their gold and their silver, in which they trusted, remained in underground tunnels and deepest caves.⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁶⁶ Yeivin, 183.

⁵⁶⁷ Schäfer, 83.

⁵⁶⁸ Schäfer, 83–84.

⁵⁶⁹ Yeivin, 192.

⁵⁷⁰ Hieronymus, *In Isaiah* II, C. 7 verse 1–2 (PL, t. 24 col. 101).

2. *Ezekiel*: 24

And after fifty years the city was consumed by eternal fire during the days of Hadrian.⁵⁷¹

3. *Joel*: 1

And we read about the campaign of Aelius Hadrianus against the Jews, he upturned the walls of Jerusalem so that he could found a (large) city Aelia on his name which he built from the ruins of the city and the debris of its ruins.⁵⁷²

4. *Daniel*, 9

And the [other] three years and six months are accounted for in Hadrian's reign, when Jerusalem was completely destroyed and the Jewish nation was massacred in large groups at a time, with the result that they were even expelled from the borders of Judae.⁵⁷³

5. *Jeremiah*, 4:31

Others relate this verse to the last exile during the days of Hadrian, since it was then that the city of Jerusalem was destroyed.⁵⁷⁴

6. *Habakkuk*, 1:2, 12–14

The siege of Hadrian led them to their very worst downfall.⁵⁷⁵

These sources were taken from various interpretations made by Hieronymus (St. Jerome) on the prophets of Israel, with the aim of presenting the fulfillment of the various prophecies, especially those about the destruction of Jerusalem, the expulsion of the Jews from the city, and the prohibition of their reentry into it. Yet there is no evidence in these sources that the Romans conquered the city

⁵⁷¹ *In Ezekiel*, C. 24 (PL, t. 25 col. 228 T).

⁵⁷² *In Joel*, C. 1 (PL, t. 25 col. 952).

⁵⁷³ *In Daniel*, C. 9 (PL, t. 25 col. 552). St. Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, Trans. by Gleason L. Archer (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1958), 156–157. Yeivin, 250, note 294.

⁵⁷⁴ *In Jeremiah*, C. 4, 31 (PL, t. 24 col. 911).

⁵⁷⁵ *In Habakkuk*, I, 2, 12–14 (CCL, LXXVI A, 608).

by force from the Jewish rebels.⁵⁷⁶ The descriptions of Hieronymus were suited to the realities of his period in which the city was inhabited mainly by gentiles. It is therefore difficult to accept the claims of Yeivin who believed that since Hieronymus was living in Palestine and had studied with Jewish teachers, his words reflect Jewish traditions and his interpretations are reliable evidence for the fact that Jerusalem had been conquered by Hadrian from the rebels.⁵⁷⁷

In source 6, which uses the term *obsidio*, it is not clear whether the meaning of the word is actually a military siege,⁵⁷⁸ or whether—as I claimed in my discussion of Eusebius—the intention was the repression of the Jews by erecting Aelia Capitolina, building the temple to Jupiter, and prohibiting the entry of Jews to Jerusalem. The Jews regarded these as real destruction and the church fathers adopted this view for theological motives.

Epigraphic Evidence

A dedicatory inscription in honor of the Emperor Hadrian engraved on two stone slabs was discovered in Jerusalem and published by Savignac:

1. [Imp(eratori) Cae(s)ari) Divi Triani
Parthic(i) [Filio Divi Nerva Nepoti]
Traiano [Hadriano Augusto . . .] Ponti(fici)Ma(xio . . .)
- 2 LI—V
mo
os lib(ertus) eius
x Fret(ensis, II[Traiana]
xII Fulm(inata)⁵⁷⁹

Savignac assumed that the released soldier mentioned in part 1 fulfilled an assignment that was connected with the three legions mention in part 2 of the inscription. In his opinion, these two stone slabs were the remains of a monument dedicated to Hadrian after the suppression of the Bar Kokhba revolt.⁵⁸⁰ Applebaum, on the contrary, claimed that parts 1 and 2 should not be considered as belonging to a single inscription. He regarded part 2 as a burial

⁵⁷⁶ Schäfer, 84–85.

⁵⁷⁷ Yeivin, 188, and see his discussion about the sources on pages 188–191.

⁵⁷⁸ Schäfer, 95, and 22, note 67. See also Lifshitz (above, note 528), 482.

⁵⁷⁹ See Raphaël, Savignac, "Inscription romaine et sepultures au nord de Jérusalem," *Revue Biblique* (1904), 1 90–99; Lifshitz, "Roman Legions," 63–64.

⁵⁸⁰ Savignac, *ibid.*, 97.

inscription. Since three legions were mentioned in this inscription, he thought it would be preferable to ascribe this part to a joint memorial for the soldiers of these legions in commemoration of an exploit of great importance associated with the conquest of Jerusalem from the rebels.⁵⁸¹ However, the assumption of Applebaum is uncertain. Ritterling suggested interpreting the inscription in a different manner. He regarded the truncated inscription as part of one that described the life of a centurion in Legio x Fretensis stationed in the city,⁵⁸² that therefore had no connection at all with the conquest or non-conquest of the city from the rebels.⁵⁸³

Evidence for the Construction of the Temple in the Hadrian Period

The various evidence and sources mentioned above have led me to reject the claim of the conquest of Jerusalem by the Bar Kokhba fighters. Therefore, I cannot concede to the accepted view of a number of scholars that the Jewish rebels renewed the cultic sacrifices and even rebuilt the Temple.⁵⁸⁴ Nevertheless, I will devote the following discussion to the sources and studies that dealt with this subject:

581 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 27.

582 Ritterling, Art. "Legio," *PW*, XXIII, 1489. See also Abraham Negev, "New Inscriptions from the Aqueduct of Caesarea," *Yedi'ot* 30 (1966): 137–138 [in Hebrew]. Negev rejects the inscription as evidence for events of the Second Revolt. The legion Legio XII Fulminata came with Cestius Gallus from Syria and was defeated by the Jewish rebels in 66 CE. After the legion took part in subduing the revolt in the year 70 CE, it was transferred to Melitene in Cappadocia and stayed there for over a hundred years. Therefore, it is doubtful that the legion participated in the Second Revolt. In 134, the threat of the Alans was subdued by the governor of Cappadocia, Arrian, who defeated the invaders with the aid of XII Fulminata and XV Apollinaris. See also François Bertrand, Bernard Rémy, "Legio XII Fulminata," in *Les légions de Rome*, 253–257; Christopher J. Howgego, "The XII Fulminata: Countermarks, Emblems, and Movements under Trajan or Hadrian," ed. Stephen Mitchell, *Armies and Frontiers in Roman and Byzantine Anatolia* (Oxford: BAR, 1983), 41–46; Everett L. Wheeler, "Legio XV Appollinaris: From Carnuntum to Satala and beyond," in *Les légions de Rome sous le Haut-Empire*. Actes du congrès de Lyon (17–19 Septembre 1998), ed. Yann Le Bohec (Lyon, Paris: de Boccard, 2000), 259–308.

583 Cf. Eck, *Judäa—Syria Palästina*, 215, and CIIP 1.

584 See Luria, (above, note 469); Ginzburg, "Was the Temple Built in the Days of Bar Kokhba?" *Sinai* 36 (1976), 160–162 [in Hebrew].

Jewish Sources

1. *TJ*, Berakhot, 9: 13c:

When Ben Zoma saw multitudes in Jerusalem, He said, praise to Him who Blessed is He that created all these to serve me.⁵⁸⁵

2. *TB*, Berakhot, 58a:

Ben Zoma once saw a crowd on one of the steps of the Temple Mount. He said, Blessed is He that discerneth secrets, and blessed is He who has created all these to serve me.⁵⁸⁶

3. *Tosefta*, Berakhot, 7:5:

Ben Zoma saw a crowd in the Temple Mount. He said, Blessed is who has created all these to serve me.⁵⁸⁷

From these sources, Luria inferred that the temple services, the daily sacrifice, and public and private sacrifices were renewed.⁵⁸⁸ Alon associated these sources with the promise of Hadrian at the beginning of his reign to rebuild the Temple because, in his view, it could not be supposed that Ben Zoma lived until after the Bar Kokhba revolt. However, Alon rejected these sources as evidence of the rebuilding of the Temple or that the Temple was still standing. In his view, the sources testify to the large Jewish population in Jerusalem between the two revolts.⁵⁸⁹ Other scholars have also dated these sources to this period, yet saw no evidence in them for any Jewish settlement in the city, viewing them only as indicating large pilgrimages to Jerusalem.⁵⁹⁰

⁵⁸⁵ "בן זומא כשהיה רואה אוכלוסין בירושלים אומר: 'ברוך שברא כל אלו לשמשני'"

⁵⁸⁶ "בן זומא ראה אוכלוסיו על גב מעלה בהר הבית, אמר 'ברוך חכם הרזים וברוך שברא כל אלו לשמשני'"

⁵⁸⁷ "בן זומא ראה אוכלוסין בהר הבית אמר 'ברוך שברא כל אלה לשמשני'" See Lieberman, *Tosefta Ki-fshuta*, I, 104.

⁵⁸⁸ Luria (above, note 469), 71, 79.

⁵⁸⁹ Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 455–456.

⁵⁹⁰ Shmuel Safrai, "The Pilgrimage to Jerusalem after the Destruction of the Second Temple," in *Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period. Abraham Schalit Memorial Volume*, eds. Aharon Oppenheimer et al. (Jerusalem: Shazar Center, 1980), 386 [in Hebrew]. See also Adolf von Schlatter, *Die Tage Trajans und Hadrians* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1897), 76; Schäfer, 88–89, who says that the sources discuss the Temple Mount and not the Temple itself.

4. *Tosefta* Eduyot, 3:3

Said R. Simeon ben Azzai, Bones were found in Jerusalem in the woodshed and the sages proposed to declare Jerusalem unclean. Said to them R. Joshua, it would be a shame and a disgrace for us to declare our house to be unclean. Where are the dead of the flood? Where are the corpses slain by Nebuchadnezzar? Where are the bones of those who were slain in the war, and until now?⁵⁹¹

5. *Mishna*, 'Eduyot, 8:5:

R. Joshua testified concerning bones that were once found in the woodshed [of the temple] that they were unclean; the sages said: They may be collected bone by bone and all continue clean.⁵⁹²

These two sources deal with the same subject and describe a single event,⁵⁹³ but scholars are divided as to their dates. Rabbi Joshua, identified as Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hanania, the disciple of Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai, lived to a very old age after the destruction of the Temple, and therefore some linked the sources for the rebuilding of the Temple to the beginning of Hadrian's reign. But Rabbi Joshua was no longer alive during the Second Revolt. Therefore, even linking the sources to the rebuilding of the Temple cannot prove its dating to the days of the Second Revolt. In the *Mishna* and in the *Tosefta*, Rabbi Joshua speaks in the past tense about an event that occurred during the Second Temple period.⁵⁹⁴ Thus, I cannot regard this event as one to which Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hanania had been an eyewitness, and it cannot be connected with the rebuilding of the Temple during the reign of Hadrian. The two sources are about an event that took place during the Second Temple period, an event that Safrai, for example, dated to the days in which the Temple was renovated by Herod.⁵⁹⁵ The words of Rabbi Joshua, which mention dead bodies

591 אמר רבי שמעון בן עזאי: מעשה שנמצאו עצמות בירושלים בדיר העצים ובקשו חכמים לטמא את ירושלים. אמר להן רבי יהושע: בושת וכלימה היא לנו שנטמא את ביתנו, איה מיתי מבול? איה הרוגי נבוכדנאצר? איה הרוגים שנהרגו במלחמה ועד עכשיו

592 Translation by Danby. העצמות שנמצאו בדיר העצים אמרו חכמים "העיד רבי יהושע על העצמות שנמצאו בדיר העצים אמרו חכמים" מלקט עצם והכל טהור"

593 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 454; Schäfer, 289.

594 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 454; Schäfer, 89–90.

595 Safrai (above, note 590), 377, rejects the Mishnaic source *Yevamot* 4: 10 as evidence for the establishment of the Temple. See also *ibid.*, 386 and note 54.

“that were killed during the war and until now,” make it clear that the reference is to the Great Revolt, and therefore the sources have no connection at all to the period of the Bar Kokhba revolt.

6. *Mishna*, ‘Eduyot, 8:6:

R. Joshua said: I have heard a tradition that they may offer sacrifices although there is no Temple, and eat the Most Holy Things although there are no curtains, and the Lesser Holy Things and the Second Tithe although there is no wall; since its first dedication availed both for his own time and for the time to come.⁵⁹⁶

According to Yeivin, the reference here is to an event that occurred soon after the destruction of the Second Temple; and from the words of Rabbi Joshua, it may be understood that immediately after the rebels conquered Jerusalem, they renewed the cultic sacrifices within the Temple area.⁵⁹⁷ Luria thought that the rebels built an altar, conducted the sacrificial services, and began building the Temple sanctuary and courtyard enclosures.⁵⁹⁸ By contrast, Safrai rejected the testimonies in the source, claiming that Yehoshua ben Hanania did not live up to the time of the Second Revolt.⁵⁹⁹

Christian Sources

Epistle of Barnabas, 16

(1) I will also speak to you about the Temple, since those wretched men were misguided in hoping rather than in their God who made them, as if the Temple were actually the house of God. (2) For they consecrated him in the temple, almost like the Gentiles do. But consider what the Lord says in order to invalidate it. Who has measured the sky with the span of his hand or the earth with his outstretched fingers? Is it not I say the Lord? The sky is my throne and the earth is my footstool for my feet. What sort of house will you build for Me? Or where is the place I can rest?

596 אמר ר' יהושע שמעתי שמקריבין, אף על פי שאין בית; ואוכלים קדשי קדשים, אף על פי שאין קלעים, קדשים קלים ומעשר שני—אף על פי שאין חומה; שקדושה ראשונה קדשה לשעתה וקדשה לעתיד לבוא.

597 Yeivin, 77.

598 Luria (above, note 469), 72.

599 Safrai (above, note 590), 377.

You knew that their hope was in vain. (3) Moreover he says again: See, those who have destroyed this Temple will themselves rebuild it. (4) This is happening. For because of their war, it was destroyed by their enemies. And now the servants of the enemies will themselves rebuild it. (5) Again, it was revealed how the city, the temple, and the people of Israel were about to be handed over. For the scripture says "It will be in the last days that the Lord will hand over to the destruction the sheep of the pasture along with their enclosure and tower. And it has happened just as the Lord said (6) But let us inquire if a temple of God still exists? It does exist where he says that he is making it. For it is written, "It will come about that when the seventh day is finished, a temple of God will be gloriously built in the name of the Lord. (7) And so I concluded that a temple exists. But learn how it will be built in the name of the Lord, Before we believed in God, the dwelling place of our heart was corrupt and feeble, since it really was a temple built by hand, for it was full of idolatry and was the house of demons, because we did everything that was opposed to God. (8) But it will be built in the name of the Lord. Now pay attention so that the temple of the Lord may be built gloriously built. And learn how we have become new, created again from the beginning, because we have received the forgiveness of sins and have hoped in the name, Therefore God truly resides within our place of dwelling within us. (9) How so? His word of faith, his call to us through his promise, the wisdom of his upright demands, the commandments of the teaching, he himself prophesying in us and dwelling in us who had served death. Opening up to us the door of the temple, which is the mouth, and giving us repentance to us—thus brings us into his imperishable temple. (10) For the one who longs to be saved looks not merely to a person, but to the one who dwells and speaks in him. For he is amazed at him since he has never heard him speak these words from the mouth not even ever desired to hear them. This is a spiritual temple built for the Lord.⁶⁰⁰

The writing above in the epistle concern the physical state of the Jewish temple: its destruction, its renovation, its reconstruction by the *servants of the enemies*, its second destruction, and its replacement by a spiritual temple. The scholars who dealt with the Epistle of Barnabas were undecided mainly about which

600 Translation of Bart D. Ehrman, "The Letter of Barnabas," in *Lost Scripture: Books that Did Not Make It Into the New Testament*, ed. Bart D. Ehrman (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 233. See also Daniel R. Schwartz, "On Barnabas and Bar Kokhba," in *Studies in the Jewish Background of Christianity* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1992), 148–149.

temple is referred to in the phrase that says it will be rebuilt by *the servants of the enemies*.⁶⁰¹ Two of the suggestions made by the scholars were connected with the period of Hadrian's rule:

- a. The epistle is associated with the sources that hint at the possibility that the temple was erected at the beginning of Hadrian's rule.⁶⁰²
- b. The construction of the temple refers here to the temple of Jupiter. This would be built after the conquest of Jerusalem from the rebels and after the destruction of the temple of Bar Kokhba.⁶⁰³

The preceding discussion of the rebuilding of the temple at the beginning of Hadrian's reign precludes the acceptance of the second suggestion.⁶⁰⁴ Nor can it be accepted after dismissing the possibility that Jerusalem was conquered by the rebels.⁶⁰⁵ On the other hand, I accept the first suggestion, made by Schwartz, that ascribed the words of the Epistle to the stage that preceded the revolt. That is to say, the intention of Hadrian was to build a Roman city in Jerusalem and to erect a temple to Jupiter in it.⁶⁰⁶

The Copper Scroll

The *New York Times*, in its report on the discovery of the Copper Scroll in the Qumran caves, noted that Bar Kokhba coins were found alongside the scroll.⁶⁰⁷

601 See James N. Rhodes, *The Epistle of Barnabas and the Deuteronomic Tradition* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 71–80. For previous research, see J.J. Gunther, "Final Rebuilding of the Temple," *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period* 7 (1976): 146; Martin B. Shukster, Peter R. Richardson, "Temple and Beth ha-Midrash in the Epistle of Barnabas," in *Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity*, vol. 11, Separation and Polemic, ed. Stephen G. Wilson (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1986), 17–31.

602 See Schwartz (above, note 600), 341–342. For an overall discussion, see Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 448–452.

603 See Schwartz, *ibid.*, 342.

604 See above, 107–111.

605 See below, 287–288.

606 Schwartz (above, note 600), 151. See also Gunther (above, note 601). According to him, based on exegetical causes and historical reasons, the unit does not describe the building of a real temple in Hadrian's time. Likewise, he argues that the unit describes the spiritualization of the temple and not its history. See Peter Richardson, Martin B. Shukster, "Barnabas Nerva and the Yavnean Rabbis," *Journal of Theological Studies* 34 (1983): 31–55; Rhodes (above, note 601).

607 *The New York Times*, April 1, 1952, page 13, col. 6. However, this is the sole reference to the coins.

Without any connection to this report, Ben Zion Luria linked the scroll with the events of the Bar Kokhba revolt. The refusal of Hadrian to allow the Jews to rebuild the Temple was regarded by him as the main cause for the outbreak of the Second Revolt. He was therefore of the opinion that, in addition to achieving political independence, the main aims of the revolt were to rebuild the Temple and renew the cultic and sacrificial rites in it. He believed that when Jerusalem was conquered by the rebels, these ritual practices were performed once again and the Temple was rebuilt. The rebels held the city for two years, and with the renewal of assault by the Romans, the city was evacuated because the fortifications were not strong enough to withstand attack, and the fighters took refuge in the stronghold of Bethar. During the evacuation of Jerusalem, the rebels carried away the Temple treasures and hid them in the Jericho Valley.⁶⁰⁸ The Copper Scroll was, in Luria's view, a list of the Temple treasures dating from the period of the Bar Kokhba revolt. He believed that these treasures were hidden by the priests in the time of trouble when the Roman legions were approaching Jerusalem, and there was a danger that the sacred vessels of the nation would fall into their hands.⁶⁰⁹ I believe that the attempt by Luria to ascribe the Copper Scroll to the days of the Second Revolt is dubious and without any basis; it relies on too many assumptions to be treated seriously. It is worth noting that, contrary to Luria, some scholars have linked the hidden treasures to the period of the Great Revolt, but without any connection to the Temple treasures.⁶¹⁰

Coins of the Revolt

A number of scholars considered the coin finds of the Second Revolt as proof for the renewal of cultic rites and the rebuilding of the Temple during the early stages of the revolt, basing their claims on the following designs and inscriptions:

608 Luria (above, note 469), 84. For the Temple vessels, see Johanan Levy, "The Destination of the Temple Vessels after the Destruction of the Second Temple," in *Studies in Jewish Hellenism*, by Johanan Levy (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1969), 255–258 [in Hebrew].

609 Luria, *The Copper Scroll* (Jerusalem: Kiryat Sefer, 1964). For a recent edition of the scroll, see Judah K. Lefkovits, *The Copper Scroll—3 Q15, A Reevaluation: A New Reading, Translation and Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 2000).

610 See also Steven P. Weitzman "Myth, History, and Mystery in the Copper Scroll," in *The Idea of Biblical Interpretation: Essays in Honor of James L. Kugel*, eds. Hindy Najman, Judith H. Newman (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 239–255.

1. The façade of the sanctuary that appears on the coins of the revolt

Even though scholars have differed in interpreting this design, many of them identified it with the design of the Temple.⁶¹¹ The general opinion among scholars is that architectural designs in the ancient world describe real buildings and not imaginary ones by the coin minter.⁶¹² Thus, a number of scholars claimed the design proves that the rebels built the Temple during the course of the Second Revolt.⁶¹³ Most of those who claimed that the city was conquered by the rebels thought that the rebels held it only for the first two years of the revolt. However, the coins with the design of the sanctuary façade are from all three years of the revolt,⁶¹⁴ which implies that coins of the third year, after the Temple had supposedly been destroyed, were still being minted with the sanctuary design. It is difficult to agree with Kanael's claim that the coins of all three years were minted together after the conquest of Jerusalem.⁶¹⁵ I find it preferable to accept the claim that the coins of the revolt served propaganda purposes during the years of the revolt, symbolizing the continued struggle against the Romans, and therefore they contain no evidence for the conquest of Jerusalem by the rebels.⁶¹⁶

2. Designs on the coins that relate to the cultic sacrifices in the Temple

A similar interpretation can be given to the designs that appear on the coins of the revolt that supposedly describe the Temple and the cultic rites in it.⁶¹⁷ These designs are symbols that commonly appeared on Jewish coins from their earliest minting. Some of them are Jewish symbols such as a harp, trumpets, a can of oil, or an amphora,⁶¹⁸ while others are from the plant world or are cultic

611 See Smallwood, 445; Reifenberg, *Jewish Coins*, 56: A façade of a temple, or of a synagogue.

612 See Alice Muehsam, *Coin and Temple: A Study of the Architectural Presentation on Ancient Jewish Coins* (Leeds: Leeds University Oriental Society, 1966), 3: "Since it has been established as a fact in numismatics that every ancient architectural coin type shows an actual building and since forms of imagination have not been found nor were even considered as a possibility by numismatic scholars." For a different opinion see Thomas Drew-Bear, "Representations of Temples on the Greek Imperial Coinage," *American Numismatic Society Museum Notes* 19 (1974): 45.

613 Luria (above, note 469), 80.

614 See Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, Year One—No. 165 (Kindler, *Coins of the Land of Israel*, no. 81); Year Two—Nos. 178–180 (Kindler, nos. 97–98); Undated coins that are related to Year Three (Kindler, nos. 116–119).

615 Kanael (above, note xx), 80.

616 See Kindler, "Bar Kokhba Coins," 163.

617 See above, note 612.

618 Kindler, "Bar Kokhba Coins," 162–163.



FIGURE 2.17 *Bar Kochba silver Shekel/tetradrachm. Obverse: the Jewish Temple facade with the rising star, surrounded by "Shimon". Reverse: A lulav, the text reads: "to the freedom of Jerusalem".*

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symbols such as the lulav, etrog, a palm frond, a bunch of grapes, or a wreath of leaves.⁶¹⁹ Most of the designs that appear on the Bar Kokhba coins also appear on those of the Great Revolt⁶²⁰ and can be regarded as a continuation of them, so there is no need to ascribe them to the rebuilding of the Temple by Bar Kokhba and his fighters.

3. The inscription *Eleazar the Priest*

According to Yeivin: "Without the renewal of the sacrifices it is difficult to understand why the rebels found it necessary to appoint a high priest, and without this appointment one cannot understand the minting of coins with the name of Eleazar the Priest just during the period of this revolt."⁶²¹ This remark emphasizes all the difficulties involved in the assumption that the inscription *Eleazar the Priest* on the coins of the revolt testify to the renewal of the sacrificial cult in the Temple built by Bar Kokhba. This assumption is based on a number of suppositions, most of which are hard to accept. The central one among them is the assumption that Eleazar fulfilled the function

⁶¹⁹ Kindler, *ibid.*

⁶²⁰ Kindler, *ibid.*

⁶²¹ Yeivin, 177.



FIGURE 2.18 *A Silver Denarius*

Obverse: trumpets surrounded by the inscription To the freedom of Jerusalem

Reverse: A lyre surrounded by the inscription Year two to the freedom of Israel.

of high priest in the temple that was erected.⁶²² On the inscription on the coin of the revolt, only *Eleazar the Priest* is mentioned, not *Eleazar the High Priest*. By comparison with the coins of the Hasmoneans, their inscriptions always include a name plus *High Priest*,⁶²³ and we have no examples among them for the inscription with a name plus *Priest*. Moreover, if Eleazar did serve as high priest in the Bar Kokhba temple, and it was destroyed in the second year of the revolt, why does his name and title appear in inscriptions of coins of the third year of the revolt?⁶²⁴ Without dealing at this stage with the difficulties in the identification of Eleazar,⁶²⁵ it is clear from the inscription that Eleazar belonged to a family of priests and fulfilled a central role in the leadership of the revolt. But the inscription does not constitute evidence of any kind for the claim that he served as a high priest in a temple in Jerusalem that had been erected by Bar Kokhba and his fighters.⁶²⁶

622 Yeivin, *ibid.*

623 For coins with the inscription *Yehoanan High Priest*, see Kindler, *Coins of the Land of Israel*, no. 4 (Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, no. 26); with the inscription *Judah the High Priest*, see Kindler, no. 5; A Coin of Judah Aristobulus I (Meshorer, *ibid.*, no. 28); with the inscription *Jonathan High Priest*, see Kindler, *ibid.*, nos. 6–7, 12–15; A coin of Alexander Jannaeus (Meshorer, nos. 12, 16–17, 20).

624 Meshorer, *ibid.*, no. 213 (Kindler, *ibid.*, no. 140).

625 See below 429–438.

626 Schäfer, 100.

Evidence for the Destruction of the Temple in Hadrian's Days: Jewish Sources:

1. *Mishna*, Ta'anit, 4:6

Five things befell our fathers on the seventeenth of Tammuz and five on the ninth of Ab. . . . On the ninth of Ab it was decreed against our fathers that they should not enter into the Land [of Israel] and the Temple was destroyed the first and the second time, and Bethar was captured and the city was ploughed up.

2. *TJ*, Ta'anit, 4:6, 69b

And the city was ploughed—Rufus whose bones should be pulverised ploughed the Temple.

3. *TB*, Ta'anit 29a:

Bethar was conquered—this is a tradition (gemara)—the city was ploughed. It has been taught (תניא): When the wicked Tarnus Rufus destroyed the temple. . . .

These three sources are clear proof for the development of traditions on the destruction of the Temple during the reign of Hadrian. The Mishna details the catastrophes that the Jews suffered on the seventeenth of Tammuz and the ninth of Ab, both of which were connected with the Bar Kokhba revolt in regard to the fall of Bethar and the ploughing of Jerusalem. The ploughing of Jerusalem refers to the foundation ceremonies of Aelia Capitolina, which included the observance of the ancient Roman custom of *circumductio*, i.e., the ploughing of the designated area (*pomerium*) with a pair of oxen for the establishment of a new settlement.⁶²⁷ Scholars are not in agreement about the date for this action, whether it was done before the outbreak of the revolt, as part of Hadrian's plan to turn the city into a Roman colony,⁶²⁸ or after the suppression of the revolt, as a punitive measure. In both Talmuds, this symbolic ceremony was interpreted as the destruction by Tineius Rufus of the sanctuary that had been built during the course of the revolt. This act was considered in

627 See Yeivin, 60; Smallwood, 459; Schürer, *History*, 1, 155. Evidence for the foundation ceremonies on coins, see above, 261–262.

628 Yeivin, 60, 147–148.

later generations to symbolize the victory of Jupiter over the God of Israel.⁶²⁹ The distance is short between the traditions that refer to the destruction of the Bar Kokhba temple by Tineius Rufus and the traditions that ascribe the destruction of this temple to Hadrian.⁶³⁰ And in a few midrashim, Hadrian was turned into the destroyer of the temple that had been erected during the Second Revolt.

4. *Tanhuma*, Bereshit, 10: 7

After Hadrian the king of Edom conquered the entire world, he returned to Rome and told his countries: 'I command you to acclaim me a divine being, for I have subjugated the entire world.' Whereupon they replied: 'you do not rule the Holy City and the Temple.' He went there, conquered the Holy City, demolished the Temple and exiled the Israelites. Upon his return to Rome he said: 'Now I have destroyed his house, burned His holy place, and exiled his people, worship me as a divine being.'⁶³¹

5. *Deuteronomy Rabba*, 3:13

R. Tanhuma said: 'What is the meaning of a time to cast stones'? This was a time for Hadrian, may his bones be turned to dust to come up and break in pieces the stones of the Temple.

Both sources are outstanding examples of the way in which later generations regarded and interpreted the transformation of Jerusalem into a Roman colony and the erection of the Temple of Jupiter in it. These acts were considered in their eyes as the destruction of the city and desecration of the Temple, even though they had been destroyed sixty-five years earlier. They can therefore easily substitute *Titus* for *Hadrian* in the campaign of destruction. And Rabbi Tanhuma of the fourth century can expound the verse in Ecclesiastes 3:5: "A time to cast away stones and a time to gather stones together," as if it refers to the shattering of the stones of the Temple by Hadrian.⁶³² In view this, it is clear beyond all doubt that sources of this kind are of no value as historical evidence

⁶²⁹ Smallwood, 459.

⁶³⁰ Bowersock (above, note 559), 135.

⁶³¹ Translated by Samuel A. Berman, *Midrash Tanhuma-Yelammedenu*, (Hoboken N.J.: KTAV Publishing, 1995), 24–25.

⁶³² See Moshe Beer, "A Single Evidence for the Question of the Discontinuation of Sacrifices in the Days of Bar Kokhba," in *Nazir Echav: A Book of Essays and Articles in Memory of*

for the existence of a third temple that was supposedly erected by Bar Kokhba and destroyed by the emperor Hadrian.⁶³³

Christian Sources

The Christian sources, as evidenced above, were influenced by theories for the destruction of Jerusalem during the Bar Kokhba period, but there are very few sources that deal with the destruction of the Temple by Hadrian. And even these few sources can hardly be regarded as historical sources that testify to the existence of a temple during the Bar Kokhba period that had been destroyed by Hadrian.

1. John Chrysostom, *Homilies against the Jews*, *Adversus Judaeos*, 10. 7

If the Jews had never attempted to rebuild the temple, they could say: 'If we had wished to set our hands to the task and to begin to rebuild it, we could by all means have completed the task.' But now I shall show that not once, nor twice, but three times they did attempt it and three times, like wrestlers in the Olympic games, they were thrown to the ground.

2. Chronicon Paschale I, 474

He (Hadrian) destroyed the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem and built (there) two public baths, and a theater [...] and he named the city after his name, and named it Aelia, since he himself is called Aelius Hadrianus.

3. Julian the Apostate

Therefore let no man deceive us with his sayings or trouble our faith in a divine providence. For as for those who make such a profanation a reproach against us, I mean the prophets of the Jews, what have they

Rabbi David Cohen the Nazir, eds. S.Y. Kohen et al. (Jerusalem: Nezer David, 1977), Vol. 1, 198 [in Hebrew].

633 For an extensive review of these sources, see Schäfer, 88–95. We decided to exclude from our discussion the following sources: 1. *Tosefta Bava Qamma*. 8:14, The chronological difficulties do not allow us to include it in our discussion. 2. *TJ*, Ta'anit 3:9 (66d). An aggadic tradition about the grandchild of Honi ha-Me'agel who fell asleep in a cave on the eve of the destruction of the Temple, woke up after seventy years, and found out that the Temple had meanwhile been destroyed and rebuilt. In the parallel tradition, *TB*, Ta'anit, 23a, the destruction and rebuilding of the temple is not mentioned at all. See Schäfer, 93–95.

to say about their own temple, which was overthrown three times and even now is not being raised up again? This I mention not as a reproach against them, for I myself, after a great lapse of time, intended to restore it, in honour of the god whose name has been associated with it.⁶³⁴

Explicit evidence for the destruction of the Temple during the reign of Hadrian is found in *Chronicon Paschale*, a work by an unknown author written at the beginning of the seventh century CE.⁶³⁵ However, Schäfer justifiably rejected this testimony as historical evidence because it concerns Aelia Capitolina. He merely noted that it was erected on the ruins of the Second Temple and not of the third one that had supposedly been erected by Bar Kokhba.⁶³⁶

The other two sources, the letter of the Emperor Julian of the fourth century and the words of the church father John Chrysostom, also of the fourth century, against the Jews, mention one subject: that the Temple in Jerusalem was built three times and destroyed three times, and that it now stood in its desolation. And indeed, a number of scholars have attributed the building of the Temple and its destruction for the third time to the reign of Hadrian.⁶³⁷ From the John Chrysostom source at least, it is clear that the reference is to the attempts of the Jews to build their temple three times. But in Schäfer's view, this was a reference to a typological number and not to three real attempts⁶³⁸ that could presumably testify to a third destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple.⁶³⁹

634 Stern, *Authors*, II, 555–556, no. 484.

635 See Yeivin, 168; Smallwood, 445; Schürer, I, 545–546.

636 See Schäfer, 96.

637 Smallwood, 445 and note 67.

638 Schäfer, 96, and note 101 Johanan Levy (above, note 608): 226, note 24. Levy lists the three occasions of the destruction of the Temple to the days of Nebuchadnezzar, Antiochus Epiphanes, and Titus. See also Stern, *Authors*, II, 557. Chrysostom continues: "Jews tried many times to rebuild their temple. Not once, not twice, but three times they tried. They tried in the time of **Hadrian**, in the time of **Constantine**, and in the time of **Julian**. But each time they tried they were stopped. The first two times they were stopped by military force; later it was by the fire which leaped forth from the foundations and restrained them from their untimely obstinacy" (*Against the Jews*, v, 11).

639 Schäfer, 97–98, added two sources to the subject: Georgius Kedrenus, who lived at the end of the 11th and the beginning of the 12th century, and Nikephoros Kallistos, who lived at the end of the 12th and the beginning of the 13th century. We exclude these sources because of their late dates.

Conclusions

Among the various sources I have dealt with regarding the conquest of Jerusalem by the Jewish rebels, there is not a single testimony, whether direct or indirect, from which one can derive that the city was conquered. This obviates any other attempts to find evidence in various sources of the control over the city by the rebels for two years or of the renewal of the sacrifices, and perhaps even of the erection of a third temple. For this reason, the claim is also rejected that the city was conquered by Hadrian from the rebels. Such claims are without any historical basis and cannot be amalgamated with the course of the Second Revolt.

It is possible, however, to suppose that the rebels had planned to conquer the city and to liberate it from Roman control. But Bar Kokhba, as a military commander who knew how to calculate his moves and was aware of the advantages and disadvantages of the rebel army under his command, would not—in my opinion—have endangered himself in an attempt to conquer the city that had been, ever since the suppression of the Great Revolt, under the control of Legio x Fretensis. The main achievements of the Jewish rebels during the initial stages of the revolt were from guerrilla warfare in the area of mountain clefts, where they managed to undermine the advantages of the Roman infantry and cavalry. The inability of the Romans to adapt themselves to the warfare methods of the Jewish rebels and to the topographical conditions of the battle zone deprived them of their superiority and even increased the achievements of the rebels. Therefore, the claim regarding the attempt of the rebels to conquer Jerusalem is without basis and stands in absolute contradiction to the way in which they struggled against the Romans. The conquest of the city would have forced the Jewish fighters to lay siege to the Tenth Legion, a method of warfare in which the rebels were not trained and that would only have emphasized the advantages of the Tenth Legion.

In addition, the scholars who thought that the city had indeed been conquered by the rebels, nevertheless claimed that Bar Kokhba and his fighters did not protect Jerusalem when the Romans conquered it from them. Their reasoning was that Bar Kokhba did not want to concentrate his forces in urban centers, and more especially in Jerusalem, since the defense of the city would have involved considerations of emotion and prestige. I contend that this reasoning is also applicable to the initial stages of the revolt, even before the city was supposedly conquered by the rebels. If one of the causes for the revolt was the transformation of Jerusalem into a pagan city, the same consideration could also apply to the attempt to liberate the city. And I allege it was for this

very reason that Bar Kokhba refrained from conquering the city. Among his reasons to forgo the conquest of Jerusalem were most certainly the strategic and logistic implications that he would have had to have taken into account. The conquest of the city might have led to the concentration of a large population in it, the cultic sacrifices would then be renewed, and perhaps an attempt would be made to rebuild the Temple, which would make it difficult to protect the city from attempts by the Romans to reconquer it.⁶⁴⁰

It seems quite probable that the conquest of the city from the Romans with the result of halting the plans of Hadrian could have led to a harsh reaction by the emperor and would have forced the rebels in the city to give up their tactical initiative and adopt undesirable defensive measures, such as those they had no choice but to adopt during the final stages of the revolt. After having lost their advantages in the mountain areas, they were forced to take refuge in the fortress town of Bethar, following which the remaining rebels fled to the caves of the Judean Desert. In view of these things, it is clear why Bar Kokhba refrained from conquering the city. This attempt would have brought the rebels into direct confrontation with the Tenth Legion and turned the city into a deathtrap for the Jewish rebels because the well-developed road network surrounding Jerusalem would have allowed the Roman forces nearby to come to the aid of the Tenth Legion.

640 On possible quarrels in the rebel's camp because of non-renewal of the sacrifices, see Baer (above, note 632), 196–206. And below, 464–465.

The Roman Army in Judaea during the Revolt

In the framework of our discussion concerning the intensity of the revolt beyond the geographical range I previously dealt with, scholars in this area of research have been occupied with a number of issues directly connected with the size of the Roman army in Provincia Judaea during the course of the revolt:

1. The number of legions and auxiliary units that took part in suppressing the revolt in Judaea
2. The number of Roman soldiers who participated in the suppression of the revolt in Judaea
3. The total number of losses in life among the Jewish participants in the revolt and the number of Romans killed in battles
4. Compulsory recruitment in the Roman army at the beginning and during the course of the Second Revolt
5. Roman military commanders and their decorations.

3.1 Roman Legions in the Bar Kokhba Revolt

When the Bar Kokhba revolt broke out, the local Roman garrison included two legions, *X Fretensis* and *VI Ferrata*, and several auxiliary units. Considering the limited area of the province, this was a very significant force.¹ Despite this, it failed to crush the Jewish rebels, and Hadrian was compelled to reinforce these legions in order to strengthen the local garrison.

The composition of the Roman army that took part in the suppression of the Bar Kokhba revolt is a controversial issue that is closely related to the geographical scope of the revolt and its participants. Those who argue that the revolt spread all over the province and that most of the Jewish population participated in it could also argue that the intensity of the Jewish revolt forced the Romans to mobilize huge forces commanded by senior officers determined to crush the revolt.²

In the research on the Second Revolt, as many as twenty different legions have been mentioned by various scholars in connection with quelling the

1 For the composition of the army, see above, 32–50.

2 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 25–27; idem, “Results,” 242; Smallwood, 445–447.

revolt. In addition, numerous auxiliary units, cohorts, and alae accompanied these legions.³ Some legions fought in full strength and others were represented only by vexillations. These suggestions present difficulties since they are based on scanty evidence; and in some cases, the evidence presented is irrelevant to the question of the composition of the Roman force fighting in Judaea. It is therefore necessary to thoroughly reexamine the entire issue. The conclusions are based on evidence currently available. New discoveries will enrich the subject under consideration. I will review the suggestions found in modern scholarship in light of the available sources and discuss the twenty legions linked to the Bar Kokhba revolt.

I will arrange the legions according to the following categories:

1. Legions that fought in full complement in the revolt
2. Legions represented only by detachments (*vexillations*)
3. Legions that were speculatively ascribed to the revolt

1. Legions fighting in full complement:

x Fretensis, VI Ferrata

These two legions composed the Roman army garrison in Judaea in AD 132. Although they certainly participated in the revolt, there is not enough direct evidence of their part during the revolt. A probable explanation for this could be that both legions suffered heavy casualties during the first phases of the fighting.⁴

1.1. *x Fretensis*⁵

The participation of *x Fretensis* in suppressing the revolt is obvious, as proved by the considerable epigraphical evidence from Judaea and other parts of the Empire.

3 The following works were reviewed: Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 640 ff; Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 25–39, 44; idem, “Bar–Kokhba Revolt,” 250; Michael Avi–Yonah, *PW Suppl.* 13 (München: 1974), s.v. Palestina, col. 403; Eshel, *Cambridge History of Judaism* IV, 122–125; Schürer, *History*, 1 547ff.; Scheiber, Above 165 note 102, 99–101 [in Hebrew]; Israel Shatzman, “Armed Confrontation,” 326 ff; Smallwood, 446 ff.; Stern, *Authors*, II, 392–407; Yeivin, 75 f., 87 ff. See also below in the bibliographical appendix: VIII. Roman Army in Provincia Iudaea, and Eck, “Repression und Entwicklung: Das römische Heer in Judaea,” *Rom und Judaea*, 105–155; idem, *Rom Herausfordern*.

4 Smallwood, 446, note 71.

5 Dabrowa, “Legio x Fretensis,” *Légions de Rome*, 317–325.

- (a) The names of the legions *X Fretensis*, *II Traiana*, and *XII Fulminata* are inscribed on two stone fragments from Jerusalem in a dedication honoring Hadrian. One stone is inscribed with Hadrian's name, and the other with the name of a soldier who had ties to all three legions. Savignac, who published the inscription, argued that both tablets are remains of a monument dedicated to Hadrian in honor of the Roman victory in the Second Revolt, and that the inscriptions prove the participation of these three legions in the crushing of the Revolt.⁶ Applebaum rejected this argument, believing instead that the second inscription is an epitaph erected by soldiers of the three legions in memory of the deceased soldiers. He thought that the unitary dedication of the three legions testifies to an important operation in the vicinity of Jerusalem, which he believed was the reconquest of the city from the hands of the rebels.⁷ However, adopting Ritterling's interpretation that the inscription is just part of the military *cursus* of a centurion who served in the *X Fretensis*,⁸ and bearing in mind that there is no certainty whatsoever that Jerusalem was conquered by the rebels,⁹ negates any military connection during the revolt between the city and the three legions.
- (b) An inscription describing the military career of Octavius Secundus is evidence that he served as a centurion in the *X Fretensis*, was decorated by Hadrian, and received a *corona aurea* for his part in the Second Revolt.¹⁰
- (c) According to an inscription from Aequum in Dalmatia, Gnaeus Iulius Verus served at one time as a tribune of the *X Fretensis* under the command of his father Sextus Julius Severus.¹¹
- (d) An unnamed senator, who was a legate of the *X Fretensis*, was decorated with two crowns (*muralis* and *vallaris*) and a single *hasta* for his service in the Second Revolt.¹²
- (e) M. Censorius Cornelianus is mentioned in an inscription from Maryport in Britain. He served as a prefect of the cohort *I Aelia Hispanorum*, which

6 R. Savignac, "Inscription Romaine et sepultres au Nord de Jerusalem," *Revue Biblique* 1 (1904), 94. Werner Eck, "Revision lateinischer Inschriften aus Jerusalem," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 169 (2009): 224–229; idem, *CIIP*, vol. 1, 16–17, no. 717.

7 Applebaum, "Results," 264–265.

8 Ritterling, *Pauly-Wissowa* XVII, Stuttgart, 1925, s.v. legio, col. 1489.

9 See above, 287–288.

10 *CIL* III, 7334 = *ILS* 2080; see Smallwood, 446, note 71. For the decorations, see Maxfield, *Decorations*, 194. Dabrowa, *X Fretensis*, 91, no. 25.

11 Birley, *Fasti*, 118–121, no. 158. Raises a possible doubt about it, since he was not awarded any military *dona*.

12 *CIL* XI, 6339; see also Maxfield, *Decorations*, 147.



FIGURE 3.1 *The inscription with the names of the three legions.*

was based there.¹³ Though the inscription has no date, it has been associated with the Second Revolt,¹⁴ and it has been argued that M. Censorius Cornelianus “accepted appointment as a centurion in x Fretensis” and fought in Judaea along with Julius Severus.¹⁵

- (f) *x Fretensis* is related to the name of Hadrian in inscriptions from the aqueduct in Caesarea. The legion was among others who were employed in the restoration of the aqueduct during the years 132–134.¹⁶



FIGURE 3.2 *The Name of x Fretensis on the Aqueduct in Caesarea.*

PHOTO BY OR FIALKOV.

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- 13 Spaul, *Cohors*², 120–123.
 14 *CIL* VII, 371 = *RIB* 814; See also Maxfield, *Decorations*, 195, 289, note 16; Paul A. Holder, *The Roman Army in Britain* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1982), 62.
 15 Birley, *Hadrian*, 274.
 16 For the inscriptions from Caesarea, see Lehmann-Holum, nos. 45, 48, 50–53; *CPII* vol. 2, nos. 1200, 1205–1208. See Eck, “Epigraphic Transmission,” *Judäa-Syria Palästina*, 214, writes “I tend to doubt that the aqueduct was built by units present in the province during the revolt.” see also, note 10.

1.2. *VI Ferrata*¹⁷

Most of the evidence on *VI Ferrata* is lacking in dates. Listed below are only those that have proof of some connection with the Second Revolt:

- (a) Legio (Lajjun) and Tel Shalem:
 - 1. Legio was the main camp of the legion.¹⁸
 - 2. Tel Shalem, a Roman camp south of Scythopolis, was a permanent base of a vexillation of the *VI Ferrata*.¹⁹
- (b) Inscriptions of the legion from the aqueduct in Caesarea are connected with Hadrian's name.²⁰
- (c) A fragmentary inscription from Clusium in Italy describes the military career of an unknown centurion. He was decorated by Hadrian while serving as *Primus Pilus* in the *VI Ferrata*. Maxfield attributes the inscription to the Second Revolt, although it is impossible to determine the occasion of the decoration.²¹

1.3. *III Gallica*²²

In 132, three legions were stationed in Provincia Syria: *III Gallica* in Raphanaea, *IV Scythica* in Zeugma²³ and *xvi Flavia Firma* in Samosata.²⁴ The stable and peaceful Parthian border at that time allowed for the transfer of a full-strength legion from Syria to the neighboring restless province without diminishing the power and the military capability of the Syrian garrison in the Roman

17 Hannah M. Cotton, "The Legio VI Ferrata," *Légions de Rome*, 351–357.

18 See *Tabula Imperii Romani Iudaea–Palaestina*, 170, Entry: Legio, Caper Otnai, Kefar Othnai. See also Yotam Tepper, *Survey of the Legio Area near Megiddo: Historical and Geographical Research*. M.A. Thesis (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 2003; Hebrew with English abstract). Idem, "Legio. Kefar Otnay," *Hadashot Arkheologiyot* 118 (2006); idem, "Legio, Nahal Qeni Survey," *Hadashot Arkheologiyot* 124 (2012) [in Hebrew]. Yotam Tepper et al. "Ground-penetrating Radar and Electromagnetic Archaeogeophysical Investigations at the Roman Legionary Camp at Legio, Israel," in *Archaeological Prospection*, 2013. Published online in Wiley Online Library (wileyonlinelibrary.com) DOI: 10.1002/arp.145.

19 See *Tabula Imperii Romani Iudaea–Palaestina*, 219–220, entry: Tel Shalem, Salem III, Salumias. 219–220. See also Nehemiah Tzori, "An Inscription of the Legio VI Ferrata from the Northern Valley," *Israel Exploration Journal* 21 (1971): 53–54.

20 See Lehmann-Holum, nos. 49, 54; *CPII*, vol. 2, nos. 1203, 1204, 1209.

21 *CIL* XI, 2112; see also Maxfield, *Decorations*, 203.

22 Edward Dabrowa, "Legio III Gallica," *Légions de Rome*, 309–315.

23 Michael A. Speidel, "Legio IV Scythica," *Légions de Rome*, 327–337.

24 *Urloiu Radu* "Legio XVI Flavia Firma from Its Creation to the Early Years of Hadrian," *Cogito, Multidisciplinary Research Journal* 3 (2010): 71–81.

province. The legion that probably joined in full strength the battlefield in Judaea was the *III Gallica*, commanded by the governor of Syria, Q. Poblicius Marcellus.²⁵ The following inscriptions provide evidence of the legion's participation in the revolt:

- (a) T. Commulius Lavenus, a veteran of the *III Gallica*, received military decorations from Hadrian. There is no indication of the reasons for the awards, but since he was discharged from military service in Antonius Pius' days, one assumes that he was rewarded in Hadrian's time for his distinction in the Second Revolt.²⁶
- (b) According to an inscription from Rome, Marcus Stadius Priscus served as prefect of the cohort *IV Lingonum*,²⁷ and tribune of the legions *I Adiutrix*,²⁸ *X Gemina*,²⁹ and *III Gallica*. He was decorated by Hadrian and was awarded with a *vexillum militaris* for his part in the war in Judaea.³⁰ From the inscription, it is difficult to determine the rank of his Judaeian command.³¹ However, on the basis of the *vexillum* being a decoration suited to the rank of prefect, scholars related his decoration to the period when he served as prefect of the *IV Lingonum*.³² To support the claim that Priscus served as prefect in Judaea, Applebaum drew upon the fact that the *IV Lingonum*, permanently based in Wales, was skilled in mountain warfare. The cohort was brought to Judaea to train the auxiliary units in mountain warfare techniques.³³ Others relate Priscus' service in Judaea to his tribunate in the *III Gallica*, adding this as further evidence that the legion participated in crushing the Bar Kokhba revolt.³⁴

25 On the career of Poblicius Marcellus see *PIR*², 1042. Edward Dąbrowa, *The Governors of Roman Syria from Augustus to Spetimus Severus* (Bonn: Dr. Rudolph Habelt GMBH, 1998), 92–94.

26 *CIL* XII, 2230 = *IL* 2313; see also Smallwood, 447, note 73; and Maxfield, *Decorations*, 120; 134–135.

27 *CIL* VI, 1523. Spaul, *Choros*², 180–181.

28 Barnabás Lőrincz, "Legio I Adiutrix," *Légions de Rome*, 151–158.

29 Joaquín Gómez-Pantoja, "Legio X Gemina," *Légions de Rome*, 169–190.

30 *CIL* VI, 1523 = *ILS* 1092.

31 Stern, *Authors*, II, 399; Schürer, *History*, 538, no. 5.

32 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 48–49; Jeno Fitz, "Legati Legionum Pannoniae Inferioris," *Acta Aantiqua Hungaricae* 11 (1961): 182.

33 Applebaum, "Results," 252.

34 Birley, *Fasti*, 124f.; B. Pilow, *Legionen*, 69 f., note 2., Spaul, *Choros*², 181, note 2.

2. *Legions sending just vexillations*

Luttwak and Shatzman discussed the issue of the use of vexillations in the Hadrianic period.³⁵ They concluded that since the first century and especially after Trajan's time, the Romans preferred to use vexillations of various compositions and sizes drawn from the legions, rather than transfer whole legions. Transferring a whole legion from one province to another weakened the operational ability of the garrison of the mother province and undermined the balance of military power on the local level. By comparison, the legion continued to function properly when a vexillation was drawn from it. The vexillation policy took into consideration the bonds between soldiers, the areas of their permanent bases, and the marital bonds with local women. On the one hand, they were less mobile because the soldiers refused to be transferred from their homes and families for long periods of time. But on the other hand, this bonding increased their fervor in defending their home bases. Furthermore, those who did join the detached vexillation were usually younger and more capable of carrying out military missions outside the province than was the average older legionnaire (who was usually married).

Shatzman distinguished between the use of vexillations operating in near provinces and those used in distant provinces. He thought that the Romans preferred to send whole legions to operations in nearby provinces—because they could always return to base in times of emergency—and that only vexillations were sent to distant provinces.³⁶ The distinction between near and distant provinces is probably too general because it ignores the distribution of legions and the security conditions of Judaea's neighboring provinces. The following are among the legions that almost certainly sent vexillations to Judaea:

2.1. *II Traiana*³⁷

The *II Traiana* was the only legion based in Egypt since AD 127.³⁸ It is hard to imagine that it left the defense of the province to minor auxiliary units and went to join the Roman forces in Judaea. Nevertheless, some epigraphical evidence does indicate that it may have had some role in the Second Revolt.

35 Edward Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire From the First Century AD to the Third* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999), 124ff.; Shatzman, "Armed Confrontation," 327; see also Robert Saxer, *Untersuchungen zu den Vexillationen des römischen Kaiserheeres von Augustus bis Diokletian* (Köln/Graz: Bohlau Verlag, 1967), 118, 123–124.

36 Shatzman, "Armed Confrontation," 327.

37 Sergio Daris, "Legio II Traiana, *Légions de Rome*", 359–363.

38 *CIL* III, 42, 79. cf. 14476.6. Kennedy, "Legio VI Ferrata," 303–305.

- (a) An inscription describes the military career of C. Nummius Constans who served as a *centurion* in two legions, *III Cyrenaica*³⁹ and *VII Claudia*,⁴⁰ and as *primus pilus* in the *II Traiana* and was decorated by Hadrian during the war in Judaea.⁴¹ Scholars disputed whether Constans served in the *III Cyrenaica* or *II Traiana* in Judaea during the Second Revolt.⁴² Despite this difference of opinion, the two possibilities imply that at least part of one of the two legions stationed in Egypt and Arabia did indeed fight in Judaea.
- (b) The *II Traiana* is mentioned in relation to Hadrian in the inscriptions from the aqueduct in Caesarea cited previously.⁴³
- (c) The previously mentioned inscription from Jerusalem comprises the names of *x Fretensis*, *XII Fulminata*, and *II Traiana*. Although there are difficulties with this inscription, it can be used as evidence for the participation of a vexillation of the *II Traiana* in the revolt.
- (d) Two items of indirect evidence of the legion from Egypt are associated with its involvement in the Second Revolt:
 - (d.1) A Latin dedicatory inscription from the Roman camp at Nicopolis near Alexandria, dedicated to the emperor Antoninus Pius, made by 136 veterans of *Legio II Traiana Fortis* who were discharged in 157 AD.

According to James F. Gilliam, since they were relieved of duty after having served 25 or 26 years, they were enlisted in the years 132 and 133 during the first phases of the Second Revolt. The composition of the 136 veterans indicates clearly how critical was the emergency caused by the Bar Kokhba Revolt in the years 132 and 133 when the recruits were sent to Judaea.⁴⁴

Richard Alston rejected Gilliam's arguments in regard to the possible participation of *Legio II Traiana* in the war in Judaea. According to him, since "we have no evidence that *Legio II Traiana* was involved in any of the fighting in Judaea," therefore, "we may also

39 Pierre-Louis Gatier, "La Legio III Cyrenaica et l'Arabie," *Légions de Rome*, 341–349.

40 Yann Le Bohec, Catherine Wolff, "Legiones Moesiae Superioris," *Les Légions de Rome*, 239–245. See below, 307–308.

41 *CIL* X, 3733 = *ILS* 2083; see also Maxfield, *Decorations*, 211–212.

42 Smallwood, 447, note 74, 450. Note 85; Stern, *Authors*, II, 398; Pilow, *Legionen*, 68. No. 3; Schürer, *History*, 548. Argued that he fought in the *III Cyrenaica*.

43 Lehmann-Holum, 73, no. 47. *CPII*, vol. 2, 1202.

44 James Frank Gilliam "The Veterans and Praefectus Castrorum of the *II Traiana* in AD 157," *American Journal of Philology* 77 (1956): 359–375.

doubt whether the perceived abnormal character of the recruits to the legions in 132–133 can be explained by events in Judaea.” He continued by saying that “statistical evidence . . . makes it very unlikely that the legion received a massive reinforcement in this period and we must, therefore, accept that the pattern of recruitment attested in this inscription is broadly representative of normal patterns.”⁴⁵

- (d.2) In a papyrus from Karanis in Egypt dated to 136, Naphtali Lewis, found an indirect testimony to a possible involvement of the legion in the war in Judaea.⁴⁶ The papyrus was written by a veteran Valerius Paulinus⁴⁷ of a certain legion, who writes to his brother Valerius Apolinarius to inform him that he would be serving as a soldier for another year, and that during this year his friend Terentianus, already a veteran, will rent his house and his fields. According to Lewis, “The date of this letter, 136, suggests that Paulinus and other veterans in his situation were retained in service because of the Jewish revolt, which Hadrian’s generals did not bring to an end in Judea till 135 AD.” Because in 136, the only legion in Egypt was the II Traiana, it can be assumed that Valerius Paulinus served in Judaea during the Bar Kokhba Revolt and therefore his discharge from the legion was delayed.

2.3. III Cyrenaica⁴⁸

Since AD 123, the III Cyrenaica was the only legion based in Provincia Arabia.⁴⁹ Security conditions and local reality in Arabia before the period of the Second

45 Richard Alston, *Soldier and Society in Roman Egypt: A Social History* (London, New York: Routledge, 1995), 44–48.

46 Naphtali Lewis, “A Veteran in Quest of a Home,” *Transaction of the American Philological Association* 90 (1959): 139–46 [= in *On Government and Law in Roman Egypt*, Collected Papers of Naphtali Lewis, ed. Ann Ellis Hanson (Atlanta GA.: Scholars Press, 1995), 65–72]. See also Silvia Strassi, “SB VI 9636 (P. Cornell I, 64) e l’archivio di Tiberianus,” eds. Michele Faraguna, Vanna Vedaldi Labez, *Δύνασθαι διδάσκειν Dunasthai didaskein*, Studi in onore di Filippo Càssola per il suo ottantesimo compleanno (Trieste: Editreg, 2006), 361–373 [=Silvia Strassi, *L’archivio di Claudius Tiberianus da Karanis* (Berlin: de Gruyter 2008), 169–180].

47 His Egyptian name was Ammonas.

48 Pierre-Louis Gatier, “La Legio III Cyrenaica et l’Arabie,” *Légions de Rome*, 341–349. See also Michael P. Speidel, “The Roman Army in Arabia,” *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, II, 8 (1977): 687–730.

49 Bowersock, *Roman Arabia*, 106; see also Werner Eck, “Vier mysteriöse Rasuren in Inschriften aus Gerasa: Zum ‘Schicksal’ des Statthalters Haterius Nepos,” in *Ἐπιγραφαί. Miscellanea epigrafica in onore di Lidio Gasperini*, ed. Gianfranco Paci, (Rom: 2000):

Revolt could not allow for sending the whole legion to the neighboring rebellious province. These conditions derived from the following causes:

- (a) The ongoing threat of invasions of Safaitic and Thamudic tribes to the province, which probably led to the destruction of Obda.⁵⁰
- (b) The manpower shortage that the legion suffered since its stationing in Arabia. Hadrian's speech of July 128 to the soldiers of the *III Augusta*,⁵¹ based in Lambaesis, praised the legion for sending reinforcements, including one cohort and four soldiers from each of its nine other cohorts to join the legion *III Cyrenaica*. According to Kennedy, the need for legionaries originated from the impossibility of recruiting soldiers in Arabia; there was an insufficient number of Roman citizens in the province who could be recruited into a legion.⁵² Considering the difficulty in conscripting manpower, a few years earlier, the Roman high command would hardly transfer the whole legion from Arabia to Judaea.
- (c1) Internal disturbance added to the disquiet in the province. Bowersock found a hint of this disorder in the time of Haterius Nepos, who was governor from AD 130.⁵³ His name was erased from inscriptions in Gerasa and Petra.⁵⁴

vol. 1, 347–362 (= *Judäa—Syria Palästina*, 83–91). On the history of the legion, see Ariele Kindler, *The Coins of Bostra* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1983), 87ff.

50 See Shimon Applebaum, Mordechai Gichon, *Israel and Her Vicinity in the Roman and Byzantine Periods* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1967), 47–49; Abraham Negev, "Obda, Mampsis and Arabia," *Israel Exploration Journal* 17 (1967): 46–55.

51 Yan Le Bohec, "Legio III Augusta," *Légions de Rome*, 373–381.

52 For Hadrian's speech, see *ILS* 2487; see also Kennedy, "Legio VI Ferrata," 305ff. Against Kennedy's suggestion, see Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 18.

53 For Haterius Nepos, see P. Yadin 23, dated to November 17, 130; P. Yadin 25, 9 July 131; P. Yadin 26, 9 July 131, with the title "legatus Augusti pro praetore." See also Bowersock, *Roman Arabia*, 108. Pierre-Louis Gatier, "Gouverneurs et procureurs à Gerasa," *Syria* 73 (1996): 48. Werner Eck, "Kaiserliche Imperatorenakklamation und ornamenta triumphalia," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 124 (1999): 226–227; Werner Eck, "Der angebliche Krieg des Aelius Caesar in Pannonien und die ornamenta triumphalia des Haterius Nepos," in *Von der Entstehung Roms bis zur Auflösung des Römerreiches*. Konferenz zum Gedenken des hundertsten Geburtstag von Andreas Alföldi (1895–1981), ed. László Borhy (Budapest: Institut für Archäologie 1999), 28–31.

54 For the inscriptions, see Bradford C. Welles, "The Inscriptions," in *Gerasa, City of the Decapolis*, ed. Carl H. Kraeling (New Haven: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1938), 402, no. 58, no. 143, 144, 145; see also Maurice Sartre, *Trois Études sur l'Arabie Romaine et Byzantine* (Paris: Collection Latomus, 1982), 32, 54. From Petra, see Jean Starcky, C. Bennett, "Découvertes récentes au sanctuaire du Qasr à Petra," *Syria* 45 (1968): 41–66. See also Werner Eck, "Vier mysteriöse Rasuren in Inschriften aus Gerasa: Zum

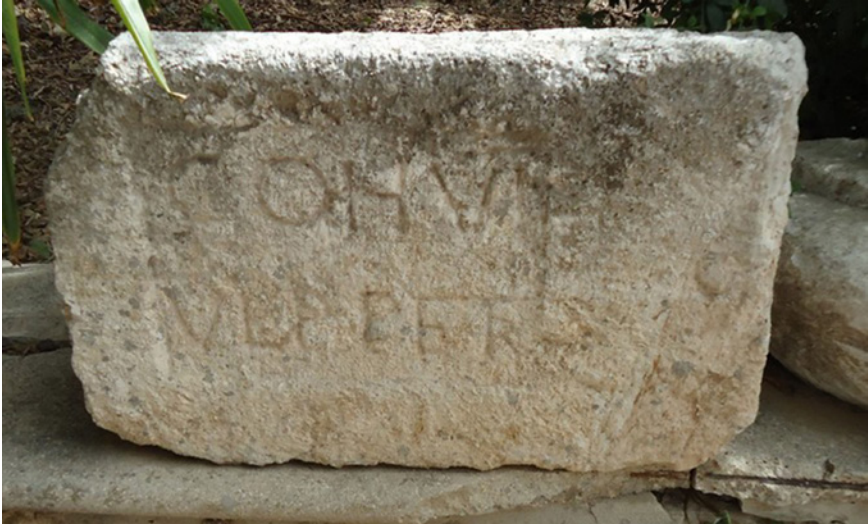


FIGURE 3.3 *The Inscription from Gerasa where Haterius Nepos name was erased. Pierre-Louis Gatier, "Gouverneurs et procureurs à Gerasa," Syria 73 (1996): 48.*

Bowersock related the *damnatio memoriae* to events in the province during the Second Revolt. According to him, Haterius was responsible for the massacre of the Jews of Arabia, and he connected these to the fate of Babatha's family which was forced to leave Arabia and moved to the war zones in Judaea.⁵⁵ Building upon this account, one can infer that the Jewish population living in Arabia took advantage of the events in Judaea and revolted also. The governor's draconian response forced them to escape to find shelter among the rebels.⁵⁶

- (c2) A Safaitic inscription from Wadi al-Ḥashād in the northeastern border of Jordan engraved by Ḥalast son of M'n of the tribe Sa'd who according to this inscription, rebelled against the tyrant Nfs for three years. The publishers of the inscription identified Nfs with the governor Haterius Nepos. Since the three years mentioned in the inscription are parallel with the

'Schicksal' des Statthalters Haterius Nepos," in 'Επιγραφαί. Miscellanea epigrafica in onore di Lidio Gasperini, ed. Gianfranco Paci (Rome: Tipigraf, 2000), vol. 1, 347–362) = *Judäa-Syria Palästina*, 83–91).

55 On the Babatha family, see below in the bibliographical appendix for the articles, mainly by Hannah Cotton.

56 See Alon, 23, Stern, *Authors*, II, 402–403, for extending the events to some parts in the eastern side of the Jordan.

years of the Second Revolt in Judaea; they deduced that there was a period of disquiet in Arabia and a rebellion against the Roman governor.⁵⁷ Adopting the identification that *Nfs* is Haterius Nepos and the comment about the inscription argues for an additional arena that kept the Romans simultaneously busy. However, the attempt to connect the two is too farfetched.

- (c3) *P. Yadin* 52, written in Greek, was recently newly reviewed by Cotton. She offered a new reading and interpretation for lines 12–15, arguing that the use of the Greek language derives from the fact that it was written by a Nabatean who did not speak Hebrew. She continued to assert that the writer of the letter was one of the Nabateans who participated in the revolt in Judaea, stationed in their own camp, separate from that of the Jews. They were refugees from Arabia who fled after their rebellion was subdued by the Romans. As for the reason of their rebellious acts in Arabia, she speculated that “the transfer of the capital from Petra to Bostra” was the cause of their uprising.⁵⁸

The above-mentioned evidence as proof for the unrest in Provincia Arabia during the rule of the governor Haterius Nepos in the years 132–135 strengthens the possibility that the local legion *III Cyrenaica* sent only limited units to Judaea in order to support the Roman army in suppressing the Second Revolt. The Roman garrison in Arabia had to devote its military efforts to local issues spread all over the province. Therefore, it is likely that the highest decoration, the *Ornamenta Triumphalia* was awarded to Haterius Nepos because of his distinction in suppressing the revolt in his own province.⁵⁹ However, the following facts provide evidence for a limited participation of the legion *III Cyrenaica* in the Second Revolt:

- (a) On the basis of the aforementioned inscription of the career of C. Numius Constans, some scholars related his service in Judaea to his office as tribune in the *III Cyrenaica*.⁶⁰

57 Sabri Abbadi, Fawzi Zayadin, “Nepos the Governor of the Provincia Arabia in a Safaitic Inscription?,” *Semitica* 46 (1996): 155–63. See also *Année épigraphique* 1996, no. 1599.

58 Hannah M. Cotton, “The Bar Kokhba Revolt and the Documents from the Judaean Desert: Nabatean Participation in the Revolt (*P. Yadin* 52),” *Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered*, 143–152; idem, “*P. Yadin* 52,” in *Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period*, 351–362.

59 For confiscation of the rebel’s property in Judaea and Arabia, see Werner Eck, “Der Bar Kokhba Aufstand, der kaiserliche Fiskus und die Veteranenversorgung,” *Scripta Classica Israelica* 19 (2000): 139–148 (= *Judäa-Syria Palästina*, 275–283).

60 See above, note 30.

- (b) An inscription of the career of C. Popilius Carus Pedo mentions his decoration by Hadrian while he served as a military tribune of the *III Cyrenica* during the Revolt in Judaea.⁶¹

2.4. *XII Fulminata*

XII Fulminata, the legion based in Cappadocia, is mentioned with the *X Fretensis* and the *II Traiana* in the same inscription mentioned previously. This led to the opinion that the *XII Fulminata* took part in full complement in suppressing the Second Revolt.⁶² I reject this supposition on the basis of the points previously made about the inscription and the fact that it was preferable to send vexillations during this period. Moreover, in the description of the campaign under the command of Flavius Arianus against the Alani in Cappadocia,⁶³ can be found additional evidence that the full strength of the *XII Fulminata* did not participate in Judaea. The Cappadocian garrison that took part in the war included the full complement of the *xv Apollinaris*,⁶⁴ under the command of M. Vettius Valens,⁶⁵ and only the left wing of the *XII Fulminata*, under the command of a tribune.⁶⁶ The partial participation of the *XII Fulminata* in the Cappadocian campaign is explained in different ways: For example, that the other part of the legion was left in Melitene to guard the southern front of the Cappadocian lines, while the war was in the north in Armenia Minor;⁶⁷ or that part of the legion participated in the war in Judaea.⁶⁸

61 *CIL* XVI, 3610 = *ILS* 1071; see Smallwood, 447. Gerold Walser, *Römische Inschriftkunst: römische Inschriften für den akademischen Unterricht und als Einführung in die lateinische Epigraphik Ausgewählt, photographiert und erläutert*, Zweite, verbesserte Auflage (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag), 1993, 56–60.

62 For the inscription, see above, note 5; see also Applebaum, “Bar Kokhba Revolt,” 246, 250.

63 Arian, *Ectaxis* 6, 15, 24. Arrian, *Against the Alans*, 6:15.

64 Everett L. Wheeler, “Legio xv Apollinaris: From Carnuntum to Satala—and beyond,” *Les Legions de Rome*, 259–308.

65 *CIL* XI 383: Ariminum.

66 See Ronald Syme, “The Career of Arian,” *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 86 (1982): 201.

67 Michael Speidel, “The Roman Army in Asia Minor: Recent Epigraphical Discoveries and Research,” in *Armies and Frontiers in Roman and Byzantine Anatolia*. Proceedings of a Colloquium held at University College, Swansea, in April 1981, ed. Stephen Mitchell (Oxford: BAR, 1983): 30, note 44.

68 See Albert Brian Bosworth, “Arian and the Alani,” *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 82 (1977): 233–235; Everett L. Wheeler, *Flavius Arianus: A Political and Military Biography* (dissertation, Duke University, Durham, NC, 1977), 150, 177. Shatzman, “Armed Confrontation,” 156, 437.

Adopting the second explanation precludes the possibility of the entire legion fighting in Judaea.

The other evidence from Judaea that concerns the legion is difficult to date and is irrelevant to the discussion at hand:

- (a) Julius Magnus, who probably commanded the legion at some undetermined date, erected an altar in Caesarea on which the name and emblem of the legion are inscribed.⁶⁹ However, Eck is right claiming that “why and when the centurion Julius Magnus dedicated the altar can only be guessed.”⁷⁰
- (b) Countermarks of the *XII Fulminata* appear on coins from Flavia Neapolis. Nevertheless, they could have been restruck at any time from AD 86/7 to AD 156, and cannot be considered evidence for the date on which the countermarks were minted.⁷¹

2.5. *v Macedonica*,⁷² *XI Claudia*⁷³

The names of these two legions appear on an inscription from Bethar.⁷⁴ From the location of the inscription, it is clear that vexillations of the two legions participated at least in the final phases of the revolt, when the Romans besieged Bethar.⁷⁵

69 Baruch Lifshitz, “*Inscriptions latines de Césarée en Palestine*,” *Revue Biblique* 21 (1962): 149–150; Levi Yizhaq Rahmani, “Un Autel Funéraire Romain a Césarée Maritime,” *Revue Biblique* 85 (1978): 268ff.; idem, “L’Autel de Césarée, Note additionnelle,” *Revue Biblique* 88 (1981): 240–241; Émile Puech, “Note d’épigraphie latine Palestinienne: Le dieu Turmasgada à Césarée maritime,” *Revue Biblique* 89 (1982): 210–221; Lehmann-Holum, 118–119, No. 119: The Altar of Julius Magnus, dated it to first–second century.

70 Werner Eck, “Dedication of an Altar to God Turmasgade by a Centurion of the Legion XII Fulminata,” *CIIIP*, vol. 2, no. 1129, 37–39.

71 See Christopher J. Howgego, “The XII Fulminata: Countermarks, Emblems and Movements under Trajan or Hadrian,” in *Armies and Frontiers in Roman and Byzantine Anatolia*. Proceedings of a Colloquium held at University College, Swansea in April 1981, ed. Stephen Mitchell (Oxford: BAR, 1983): 41–46. François Bertrand, Bernard Rémy, “Legio XII Fulminata,” *Les Légions de Rome*, 253–257.

72 Ionas Piso, “Les légions dans la province de Dacie,” in *Les Légions de Rome*, 213–218.

73 Rudolf Fellmann, “Die 11. Legion Claudia Pia Fidelis,” in *Les Légions de Rome*, 127–131.

74 *CIL* III, 13586 = 14155². See Charles Clermont-Ganneau, *Archaeological researches in Palestine during the years 1873–74* (London: Published for the Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund, 1899), 263–270.

75 Germer-Durand identifies the *x Fretensis* in the inscription, see *Revue Biblique* 3 (1894): 614; Pilow, *Legionen*, 69, relates the inscription to Trajan’s time, when the two legions were sent to the East. Against this claim, see Yeivin, 222. Note 89; Stern, *Authors*, II, 39.

Applebaum argued that these legions from Moesia Inferior fought in Judaea in full strength, and he postulated that a third legion from the same province, the *I Italica*, also participated in the Bethar siege.⁷⁶ It should be mentioned that the legion *I Italica* does not appear in the above inscription, and therefore its purported presence at Bethar is undocumented.⁷⁷ In his attempt to argue for the full-strength presence of the *v Macedonica* and the *xI Claudia* in Judaea, Applebaum quoted an epitaph found in Scythopolis with the name of Publius Aelius Capito, a soldier in the *xI Claudia*, who died after ten years of service at the age of thirty-five.⁷⁸ There is no hint as to the date of his death, nor any indication that it was in any way related to the Second Revolt.⁷⁹ Therefore, to argue on the basis of this inscription that Legio *xI Claudia* served in full strength in Judaea is stretching a point, especially since the *v Macedonica* is not mentioned at all in this context.⁸⁰ A funerary inscription from Neapolis was engraved in memory of Marcus Ulpius Magnus, who served as a centurion in *v Macedonica*, originally from the colony Claudia Savaria in Upper Pannonia. The tombstone was erected by two centurions, Flavius Moderatus and Julius Ingenus. It was dated to the days of the Second Revolt, but any date is subject to speculation.⁸¹

2.6. *x Gemina*⁸²

The *x Gemina* was stationed in Upper Pannonia. There are two pieces of evidence for the possibility that a vexillation of this legion participated in the crushing of the revolt:

76 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 45; idem, "Bar-Kokhba War," 250.

77 Pilow, *Legionen*, 70.

78 Michael Avi-Yonah, "Greek and Latin Inscriptions from Jerusalem and Beisan," *Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine* 8 (1939): 57ff.

79 See Schäfer, 128.

80 For an attempt to connect the *v Macedonica* with the Second Revolt, see Joseph Meyshan, "The Legion Which Conquered Jerusalem in the War of Bar-Kokhba (AD 132–135)," in *Essays in Jewish Numismatics* (Jerusalem: s.n., 1968): 143 ff. See our discussion above, 261–262. Compare with Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 83, note 243. See also Gideon Fuks Scythopolis—A Greek City in Eretz-Israel (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 1983), 101–103 [in Hebrew]. For other inscriptions mentioning the *v Macedonica* from Emmaus, see *CIL* III, 6647, 13588, 14155. (11.12). From Sebaste, see David Gordon Lyon, "The Harvard Expedition to Samaria," *Harvard Theological Review* 2 (1909): 111–113.

81 F.M. Abel "Nouvelle inscription de la Ve legion macedonique," *Revue Biblique* 35 (1926): 421–424; Yitzhak Magen, *Flavia Neapolis, Shechem in the Roman Period* (Jerusalem: Staff Officer of Archaeology—Civil Administration of Judea and Samaria, Israel Antiquities Authority, 2003), 312–313 [in Hebrew].

82 Joaquín Gomez-Pantoja, "Legio x Gemina," *Les Légions de Rome*, 169–190. See especially, 190.



FIGURE 3.4 *An Altar from Caesarea erected by Lulius Magnus the centurion the Legio XII Fulminata.*

PHOTO BY OR FIALKOV.

- (a) Q. Lollius Urbicus served as *legatus imperatoris Hadriani* and as legate of the *x Gemina* in Judaea. Hadrian decorated him with the golden crown and the *hasta pura*.⁸³ While Birley attributed the decoration to his service as *legatus Augusti*, others, like Eck, preferred to relate it to his command of the *x Gemina*.⁸⁴ Based on the inscription honoring Sextus Attius Senecio, Eck claimed that Urbicus accompanied Severus with the legion, other units from legions stationed in Pannonia Superior, and auxiliary units from the province, including the *ala I Thracum victrix civium Romanorum*, stationed in the province in the second century.⁸⁵
- (b) Sextus Attius Senecio served as prefect of the *ala Flavia Gaetulorum*⁸⁶ and as tribune of the *x Gemina*. He probably fought with the legion in Judaea.⁸⁷
- (c) A small Bar Kokhba bronze coin was found in Vindobana (Vienna). This coin was connected with inscriptions of the commanders of the legion who served in Judaea.⁸⁸

3. Legions that did not fight in Judaea

3.1. XIV Gemina⁸⁹

Scholars argued that the epitaph found in Gadara of a soldier of the legion suggests XIV Gemina's participation in crushing the revolt.⁹⁰ However, this is not sufficient evidence that the legion fought in Judaea during the Second Revolt, as was suggested. And even the discovery of nine Bar Kokhba coins in Carnuntum, the base of the legion, cannot support this assumption.⁹¹

83 CIL VIII, 6706 = ILS 1965 (Castellum tidditanorum). See Maxfield, *Decorations*, 147–148.

84 Birley, *Fasti*, 113. Schürer, *History*, 548. Stern, *Authors*, II, 399–400.

85 CIL, VI 3505; Eck, “Bar Kokhba Revolt,” 81: “Furthermore, not only the legio x Gemina but also the other Pannonian legions must have sent vexillationes to Judaea.” See also Eck, *Judäa-Syria Palästina*, 236 and Note 30, idem, *Rom Herausfordern*, 39–41. For the Ala, see Spaul, *Ala*², 226–227, no. 80.

86 Spaul, *Ala*², 124–125, no. 40.

87 CIL VI, 3505; see Saxer, *Untersuchungen zur den Vexillationen*, no. 49; Smallwood, 447, note 75; Stern, *Authors*, 2, 399. But see Pilow, *Legionen*, 69, who argues that Senecio served in Judaea as prefect of the ala. See also Eck, *Judäa-Syria Palästina*, 236 and Note 30.

88 Hanan Eshel, Boaz Zissu, Gabriel Barkai, “Sixteen Bar Kokhba Coins from Roman Sites in Europe,” *Israel Numismatic Journal* 17 (2009–10): 92–93.

89 Thomas Franke, “Legio XIV Gemina,” *Les légions de Rome*, 200.

90 CIL III 120911; see Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 23, 58; idem, “Bar-Kokhba War,” 397, note 155. Franke, previous note, 200.

91 See Eshel, Zissu, Barkai, (above, note 88), 93–94.

3.2. *IV Scythica*, *XVI Flavia Firma*

These two legions were based in Syria during the Second Revolt. There is no evidence of their participation in the war in Judaea.⁹² On the other hand, there is some evidence that the legion *IV Scythica* continued to serve in Syria:

- (a) From a cursus inscription of C. Julius Severus, the commander of the legion, it is clear that the legion remained in Syria when Publius Marcellus left for Judaea with the *III Gallica*.⁹³
- (b) The cursus inscription of C. Lingustinius Disertus indicates that he served as legionary centurion in the *XX Valeria Victrix* in Britain, and that during the Second Revolt he was transferred by Julius Severus to Syria to serve in the *IV Scythica*. After the revolt, he returned to Britain and continued to serve in the *XX Valeria Victrix*.⁹⁴

3.3. *III Augusta*, *VII Claudia*

The *III Augusta* served in Africa, and the *VII Claudia* was stationed in Upper Moesia. Alon linked both of them with the Second Revolt.⁹⁵ While the evidence he had for any connection of the former to the revolt was unsupported, he suggested the possibility of relating the *VII Claudia* to the service of C. Numius Constans. Since I previously rejected that option, I also deny the participation of the *VII Claudia* in Judaea. Nevertheless, some other indirect evidence was used to prove that *VII Claudia* participated in the Revolt:

- (a) A dedicatory inscription from Viminacium, in Moesia Superior dated to the year 158/159 AD, listing 239 soldiers of Legio *VII Claudia*, who were discharged by Curtius Iustus, the governor of Moesia Superior in 158 or 159 AD.⁹⁶ Because they had been enlisted in the year 132/133 AD, the exceptional number of recruits was related to events of the Bar Kokhba Revolt. I reject this interpretation because about 270 soldiers of the legion

92 See Alon, *The Jews in Their Land*, 609. Michael A. Speidel, "Legio IV Scythica," in *Les Légions de Rome*, 333, argues that the legion may well have taken part in the fierce fighting during the Jewish revolt of Bar Kokhba. However, there is, as yet, no evidence that Hadrian sent the legion (or a detachment) against the Jewish rebels.

93 See above, note XXX.

94 *CIL* XI 5960; see also Maxfield, *Decorations*, 195.

95 See Alon, *The Jews in Their Land*, 609.

96 *CIL* III, 8110 = *Inscriptions de la Mesie Supérieure*, vol. 2, 51; see also Miroslava Mirković, "New Fragments of Military Diplomas from Viminacium," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 126 (1999): 249–254. On Curtius Iustus, see Bengt E. Thomasson, *Laterculi Praesidum: Moesia, Dacia, Thracia* (Göteborg: RADIUS, 2009), vol. 1, 45: 20: 041 C.

who were enlisted in the year 169 were discharged in the year 195.⁹⁷ Was there any emergency for this high number of recruits or was it regular procedure?⁹⁸

- (b) The evidence from nine diplomas dated to April 23, 157, issued to the auxiliary units stationed in Moesia Superior by Curtius Iustus, could be considered an indication of heavy recruitment in the year AD 132. This heavy conscription could be interpreted in connection with the Second Revolt. However, Eck, MacDonald, and Pangrel preferred to connect it with Hadrian's visit in the provinces in the Danube Region.⁹⁹
- (c) The name of the legion *VII Claudia* came up in a funerary inscription from Akko. A soldier or veteran named Olpius Martidus (or Martinus), who served in Legio VII Claudia, was buried in Akko. However, the publishers of the inscription assumed that the soldier was buried about the time of Trajan's reign.¹⁰⁰

3.4. *IX Hispana, XXII Deiotariana*¹⁰¹

The attempt to argue that these two legions participated in the Bar Kokhba revolt is unfounded, and the valid evidence hints at quite the opposite conclusion.¹⁰²

97 *IMS*, II, 53.

98 Miroslava Mirković, "The Roster of the Claudia Legion," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 146 (2004): 211–220.

99 Werner Eck, David J. MacDonald, Andreas Pangerl, "Ein weiteres Diplom aus der Konstitution des Antoninus Pius für die Truppen von Moesia superior vom 23. April 157," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 165 (2008): 237–239.

100 Werner Eck, Yotam Tepper, "Ein Soldat der Legio VII Claudia in einer Grabinschrift aus Acco/Ptolemais," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 24 (2005): 119–123. We should not connect the hoard of 46 *tetradrachms* found in Akko in a Roman military cemetery to the Second Revolt. The hoard includes two coins dated to the early days of Hadrian. See Yotam Tepper, "A Pagan Cemetery from the Roman Period at the Foot of Tel Akko: Evidence of the Burial of Roman Soldiers and Citizens of Colonia Ptolemais," in *One Thousand Nights and Days, Akko Through the Ages*, eds. Ann E. Killebrew, Vered Raz-Romeo (Haifa: Hecht Museum, Haifa University 2010), 33*–39* (in Hebrew: 25–32). Idem, "Evidence of the Burial of Roman Soldiers and Citizens of Colonia Ptolemais—Preliminary Report," *Hadashot Arkheologiyot* 126 (2014): 32–39.

101 Sergio Daris, "Legio XXII Deiotariana," in *Les Légions de Rome*, 365–367.

102 *CPII*, vol. 2, no. 1201. Eck identified the legion XXII Deiotariana in the inscription. A detachment of the legion participated in the reconstruction of the aqueduct. Since the legion was destroyed in the revolt, its name was intentionally erased. I reject this assumption. See my discussion about the destiny of the legion, above, 198–209; for the legion *IX Hispana*, see Jan Kees Haalebos, "Römische Truppen in Nijmegen," in *Les Légions de Rome*, 471–473.

3.5. *I Italica*

Although it was suggested that the legion fought in Judaea on the basis of the inscription from Bethar, the legion is not mentioned in the inscription, and no other evidence ties it to the Second Revolt.¹⁰³

3.6. *I Audiutrix*,¹⁰⁴ *II Audiutrix*¹⁰⁵

The *I Audiutrix* was based in Brigetio in Upper Pannonia and the *II Audiutrix* was based in Aquincum in Lower Pannonia. Scheiber tried to prove, on numismatic and epigraphic grounds, that these two legions sent vexillations to Judaea during the Second Revolt.¹⁰⁶ However, the evidence is not convincing.¹⁰⁷ Inscriptions from Samaria indicate the possibility of units from some auxilia from Upper Pannonia serving in Judaea,¹⁰⁸ but no evidence points to vexillations of the *I Audiutrix* or the *II Audiutrix* serving in Judaea.

3.7. *XIII Gemina*

This legion was stationed in Apulum in Dacia since the Second Dacian War in 106. Though it was assumed that it participated to some extent in the fighting during the Second Revolt, there is no evidence connecting it with Judaea.¹⁰⁹ It remained in Dacia until the days of Auerlianus, AD 270–275, when it was transferred to Ratiaria.

From the list of twenty legions from all over the Empire with names that were mentioned in connection with the Bar Kokhba revolt, evidence indicates that only three of them fought in full strength in Judaea during the revolt. Other legions sent vexillations to Judaea, though there is no way to estimate the strength and size of these units. And some of the legions mentioned have no ties to the Second Revolt.

103 See above, note 47. The legion's name appears in relation to this area in an inscription mentioning Numisius Sabinus; see Henry Michael D. Parker, *The Roman Legions*, Reprinted with corrections (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1971), 112ff.

104 Barnabás Lörincz, "Legio I Adiutrix," *Légions de Rome*, 151–158.

105 Barnabás Lörincz, "Legio II Adiutrix," *Légions de Rome*, 159–168.

106 See Scheiber, (above, 165, note 102, 99–101. See also, on a coin of Bar Kokhba found in Brigetio, K. Biro-Sey, "Coins from Identified Sites of Brigetio and the Question of Local Currency," *Regeszet Füzeteh* 11. 18 (1977): 47, no. 226. According to him, this implies that *Legio II Adiutrix* may have taken part in the war. See also Eshel, Zissu, Barkai, (above, note 88), 94.

107 Eck, 81, connects *Legio II Adiutrix* to the Revolt, saying that units of this Panonian legion joined *Legio X Gemina* from the same province.

108 See above, 306.

109 Ritterling, *PW*, XII.2, s.v. *Legio*, 1720ff.

3.2 Auxiliary Units in the Bar Kokhba Revolt

Our knowledge about the composition of the auxiliary force (*auxilia*) stationed in Judaea after 70 CE is deficient with regard to the numbers and identity of the units that were in service in the province.¹¹⁰ The composition of the auxiliary forces that fought in Judaea during the years 132–135 is obscure. Nonetheless, suggestions have been made for a long list of units that participated in the Second Revolt.¹¹¹ The participation of some of them is said to be uncertain. However, even for those said to be certain, a number of difficulties place their participation in the revolt in doubt. In order to verify their participation, I will examine the evidence that has accumulated about them in connection with their activities during the years of the revolt.

1. Units mentioned in diplomas of 86 CE

Evidence for the participation of three units in the Second Revolt is derived from a diploma of 86 CE. However, there is no evidence that these units remained in Judaea until 132 CE. In fact, a study of the epigraphic testimony reveals a completely different picture:

- 1.1 *Ala I Thracum Mauretana*. This unit appears in a diploma of 86, 87, and 90 CE; the next time it is mentioned is in 134 CE in Egypt, where it became part of the stationary forces at least until 206 CE.¹¹²
- 1.2 *Cohort I Thracum*. The question regarding its participation in the Second Revolt is directly related to its identity.¹¹³ Mellor thought that the first Thracian cohort was transferred to Syria in 88 CE after the title *Augusta* was appended to its name. In 106 CE, with the establishment of Provincia Arabia, this unit was transferred there as part of the stationary forces, and the title *Equitata* was appended to its name.¹¹⁴ Testimonies about it from

¹¹⁰ See above, my review, 32–40.

¹¹¹ Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, Appendix, 65–68.

¹¹² For evidence of the ala in 134, see *BGU* II, 656= *CPL* 118; Sergio Daris, *Documenti per la storia dell' esercito Romano in Egitto* (Milan: Società editrice vita e pensiero, 1964), no 4. For more evidence from Alexandria for the year 142, see *AE* 1948, 168; from 156, see Robert O. Fink, *Roman Military Records on Papyrus* (Cleveland: American Philological Association, Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1971), 1571, no 64; for the year 156/161—*CIL* XVI, 184; for the year 199—*ILS* 2543; and for the year 206, *ILS* 4424.

¹¹³ On the difficulties identifying the Thracian units, see Michael G. Jarrett, "Thracian Units in the Roman Army," *Israel Exploration Journal* 19 (1969): 214

¹¹⁴ Ronald Mellor, "A New Roman Military Diploma," *The Journal of Paul Getty Museum* 6–7 (1978–1979): 182–183; Roxan, *RMD* 1, 32, no 3.

the beginning of the second century CE have remained in Kurnub (Mampsis).¹¹⁵ The cohort stayed in Arabia until the fifth century CE, as testified to by inscriptions from Bosra and its environs.¹¹⁶ On the other hand, Jarrett believed that after 86 CE, this cohort served under the same name in Galatia and in Moesia Superior or that it was stationed in Egypt in 127 CE under the name of *I Thracum E*.¹¹⁷ In view of these two attempts at identity, it is clear that Cohort *I Thracum* cannot be connected with the events of the Second Revolt.¹¹⁸

- 1.3 Cohort *II Cantabarorum*. Besides the information about its stay in Judaea during the years 86–90 CE, there are no further details about this cohort,¹¹⁹ and therefore the attempt to associated it with the Second Revolt cannot be based on any evidence.

2. Units mentioned in a diploma of 139 CE

Fifteen units mentioned in the diploma of 139 CE¹²⁰ are said to have participated in the Second Revolt. With the help of various testimonies attached to their names, it is possible to classify them into a number of groups and to determine whether they did indeed take part in the Second Revolt.

- 2.1. Five units are said to have participated in the Second Revolt. But besides the actual mention of their names, no proof of their participation has been brought forward. These units are the ala *Antiana Gallorum* and the cohorts *I Ulpia Galatorum*, *II Ulpia Galatorum*, *IV Petraeorum*, *VI Petraeorum*. New evidence can be added about some of these units, but even that cannot support verification of their participation in suppressing the Second Revolt. For example, ala *Antiana Gallorum* is

¹¹⁵ Abraham Negev, "Obda Mampis and Arabia," *Israel Exploration Journal* 17 (1967): 52–53.

¹¹⁶ For evidence on the stationing of the cohort in Arabia, see Imatan *CIL* III 1102, 110; Um al Quttein *CIL* III 109; On Kasar al-Hallabat, see David L. Kennedy, *Archaeological Exploration on the Roman Frontier in North East Jordan*, (Oxford: BAR, 1982), 39–40; Asabaia: *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 37.32.

¹¹⁷ See Jarrett, (above, note 113), 214.

¹¹⁸ For a different restoration, see Margaret Roxan, "Pre-Severan Auxilia Named in the *Notitia Dignitatum*," in Roger Goodburn, Philip Bartholomew, eds., *Aspects of the Notitia Dignitatum* (Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 1976), 65.

¹¹⁹ Spaul, *Cohors*², 100. The cohort may have been incorporated into *Cohors Hispanorum*, which served in Judaea in 105, or into *II Hispanorum* in Cappadocia.

¹²⁰ *CIL* XVI, 87.

mentioned in diplomas from Syria for the years 54 and 88 CE.¹²¹ Later, it is mentioned in a diploma for 139 CE from Syria-Palaestina, according to which it remained there at least until 186 CE.¹²² Of the four cohorts listed here, only *IV Petraeorum* is mentioned in the diploma of 139 CE, while the other three appear in diplomas from Syria-Palaestina of the years 149/161 and 186 CE.¹²³ Despite these testimonies, there is no definite evidence for *IV Petraeorum*'s stay in Judaea before the year 139 CE. Therefore, it is not possible to determine whether they were brought to Judaea in order to participate in the suppression of the revolt or whether they were attached afterwards to the stationary forces in the province.

- 2.2. Units mentioned in the diploma have various kinds of evidence attached to their names that may be interpreted as proof of their participation in the revolt, but I cannot accept this proof as sufficient to support a claim of participation in the revolt:

Cohort *I Flavia CR.E.*

This cohort is mentioned in a diploma from Syria of the year 88 CE.¹²⁴ Information about it comes from diplomas of Syria-Palaestina of the years 139 and 149–161 CE. It is mentioned once again in a diploma from Syria in 163 CE.¹²⁵ From these testimonies, it is difficult to decide whether the cohort did indeed serve in Judaea during the revolt. Perhaps it was attached to the stationary force in the province only after the revolt was suppressed.

Cohort *V Gemina CR.*

Further evidence on cohorts mentioned in the diploma of 139 CE appears in an inscription in which the career of Aemilius Juncus is described.¹²⁶ According to this inscription, he served in four positions, as a prefect of

121 The ala is listed in a diploma from Syria named *Gallorum et Thracum Antiana*. For the year 54, see *CIL* XVI, 3, and for the year 88, see *RMD* 132, 3.

122 The ala is listed in two diplomas from Syria-Palaestina in the years 149/161, see *RMD* 1, 81, no. 60. Charles Reeves, "A New Diploma from Syria-Palaestina," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 33 (1979): 117–123. For the year 186, see Baruch Lifshitz, "Un fragment d'un diplôme militaire de Hebron," *Latomus* 35 (1976), 117–122. See also *RMD* I 69.

123 The cohort *II Ulpia Galatorum* is listed in diplomas dated to the years 149/161 and 186 (see previous note). Cohort *IV Petraeorum* is listed in the diploma dated to 149/161, and cohort *I Ulpia Galatorum* is mentioned in a diploma dated to the year 186. See *RMD* I, 90. No. 69.

124 *CIL*, XVI, 35.

125 *CIL*, III, 600.

126 *Année Épigraphique* 1935 167.

the cohort *I Panoniarum*; a tribune of the cohort *v Gemina*; a tribune of the legion *x Fretensis*; and as a prefect of the ala *Gallorum Veteranaeum*. Aemilius Juncus received decorations from Trajan for his part in the Parthian wars as a prefect of the cohort *I Panoniarum*. He held his third position, as a tribune in the legion *x Fretensis*, at the beginning of the third decade of the second century.¹²⁷ This means that Juncus held his second position as a tribune of the cohort *v Gemina* between the years 114/117 and 130 CE, which are not related at all to the events of the Second Revolt. But it may be that Aemilius Juncus participated personally in the suppression of the revolt as a tribune of the legion *x Fretensis*.

Cohort *I Sebastenorum CR*.

This cohort was stationed in Syria in 88 CE.¹²⁸ Its presence later on in Syria-Palaestina is documented in three diplomas of the years 139, 149/161, and 186 CE. In an inscription from Samaria, the name of a soldier who served in the cohort is mentioned.¹²⁹ However, the inscription cannot be dated with certainty, and since the cohort remained in the region for a long period of time, this evidence from Samaria does not contribute anything to our discussion.

Ala *Gallorum et Thracum*

This cavalry unit was included in a list of the units that participated in the suppression of the revolt.¹³⁰ In two diplomas from Syria of the years 88 and 91 CE, the ala *Gallorum et Thracum Constantium* is mentioned. In the opinion of Roxan, this ala can be identified with the aforementioned unit.¹³¹ The ala is mentioned in a diploma from Syria-Palaestina of 139 CE, but is missing in those of 149/161 and 186 CE. There is no evidence, however, that could connect this unit with Judaea before the year 139 CE, which is the year in which it was stationed in Judaea.

¹²⁷ Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 66, no. 12. Applebaum claims that Aemilius Juncus served as a tribune of a cohort, after he served as tribune of the legion *x Fretensis*. On the other hand, Pflaum argued that the order of his duties was reversed. See Pflaum, *Carières*, no. 116. See also Maxfield, *Military Decorations*, 168.

¹²⁸ *CIL*, XVI, 35; *RMD*, 1, 32, no. 3.

¹²⁹ Michael Avi Yonah, "Newly Discovered Latin and Greek Inscriptions," *Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine* 12 (1946): 96.

¹³⁰ *CIL*, XVI, 3.

¹³¹ *RMD* 1, 32, no. 3; 34 No. 4; 90, note 3.

Ala VII Phrygum

This cavalry unit was stationed in Syria-Palaestina in 139 CE. The attempt to locate this unit in a diploma from Syria for the years 134/154 has no basis.¹³² The unit that is mentioned in the diploma is *I Phrygum*, which is also mentioned in a diploma of 88 CE from Syria.¹³³ It is quite clear that the reference is to two different alae,¹³⁴ and therefore no evidence can link this unit to the events in Judaea before 139 CE.

- 2.3. One unit is mentioned in a diploma, for which there is evidence that does not allow dating its stay in Judaea to the days of the Second Revolt. The cohort *I Damascenarum* was still stationed in Egypt on June 20 in the year 135 CE.¹³⁵ Applebaum thought that this cohort participated in the suppression of the revolt only in its final activities.¹³⁶ But in view of the date 135 CE, it is preferable to assume that it was brought to Judaea as part of the stationary forces only after the revolt had been suppressed. The cohort remained in Syria-Palaestina at least until 186 CE, as can be derived from the evidence in the diploma of that year.
- 2.4. A few other units mentioned in a diploma may have been stationed in Judaea during the Second Revolt, according to information about them.

Cohort III Bracaraugustanorum

This cohort was stationed in Raetia between the years 107 and 161/168, as mentioned in diplomas from Raetia.¹³⁷ However, a unit with a similar name appears in diplomas from Britannia of the years 103–146 CE.¹³⁸ A

132 *CIL* XVI, 103.

133 *RMD*, 32–33, no. 3.

134 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 67–68, no. 29. The evidence from *CIL* II 4251 is related to ala I Phrygum. See also David Kennedy, "Ala Phrygum and Ala VII Phrygum," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 118 (1997), 300–304. Spaul, *Ala*², 183–184.

135 See *BGU* I, 73. See also *BGU* I, 136, evidence for the stationing of the unit on March 24, 135, in Egypt.

136 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 65, no. 6.

137 For evidence of the cohort in Raetia, see Year 107—*CIL* XVI 55; Years 125/128 Roxan *RMD* I, 58, no. 32; year 147—*CIL* XVI 94; years 149/161 *RMD* I 80, no. 59; year 153—*RMD* I 69, no. 46; years 153/157—*RMD* I 74, no. 51; years 154/161—*CIL* XVI 117; years 156/157—*CIL* XVI 183; years 161/168—*CIL* XVI 125; year 162—*CIL* XVI 118; year 166—*CIL* XVI 166; years 167/168—*RMD* I, 89, no. 68. See also Spaul, *Cohors*², 92–93.

138 For evidence of the cohort in Britannia, see year 103—*CIL* XVI, 48; year 122—*CIL* XVI, 69; year 124—*CIL* XVI, 70; year 146—*CIL* XVI, 93; See also Holder, 114, who claims that the cohort arrived in Britannia in the year 42/43.

cohort of this name was stationed in Syria-Palaestina in the year 139 CE. Willy Hüttl claimed that the cohort mentioned in Syria-Palaestina in 139 CE is the third cohort of that name.¹³⁹ In opposition to them, some tried to identify it with the unit from Raetia and claimed that the cohort was brought to Judaea together with other units from Raetia.¹⁴⁰ In my opinion, if a unit of this name was actually brought to Judaea for the suppression of the revolt, it is preferable to connect it with the one from Britannia. The cohort arrived in Judaea from Britannia together with Julius Severus, fought in Judaea, remained there after the revolt was suppressed, and later returned to Britannia.

Cohort *IIII Bracaraugustanorum*

This cohort was stationed in Syria in 88 CE.¹⁴¹ Evidence regarding it is from Syria-Palaestina in two diplomas dated for the years 139 and 186 CE. It may be that it was stationed in Syria-Palaestina during those years, even though its name does not appear in the diploma of 149/161 CE.¹⁴² In view of further evidence, it is possible to date its stay in Judaea before the year 139 CE. In an inscription from Cirta, the cohort and its prefect, C Aufidius Maximus, are mentioned as being in Judaea.¹⁴³ Although the dating of the inscription is uncertain, the reference to the place of its service in Judaea indicates a date before the year 135 CE, in which the name of the province was changed from *Provincia Judaea* to *Provincia Syria-Palaestina*.

Cohort *I Montanorum*

Diplomas from Pannonia and Moesia Superior show that the two units stationed in these two provinces bore the same name, one in Pannonia during the years 167–180 CE¹⁴⁴ and the other in Moesia Superior during

139 Willy Hüttl, *Antoninus Pius* (New York: Arno Press, 1975) [reprint of the 1933–1936 edition], vol. 1 251, no. 88.

140 Aladár Radnóti, "Neue Ratische Militardiplome aus Straubing und Eining," *Germania* 39 (1969): 114.

141 *CIL* XVI, 35.

142 Spaul, *Cohors*², 95.

143 *CIL* XVI, 7079.

144 For evidence of the stationing in Pannonia, see year 80—*CIL* XVI, 26; year 84—*CIL* XVI, 30; year 85—*CIL* XVI, 31; year 98—*CIL* XVI, 42. This year, the title *CR* was added to its name; year 102—*CIL* XVI, 47; for Lower Pannonia: year 110—*CIL* XVI, 164; year 114—*CIL* XVI, 61; year 139—*CIL* XVI, 175; year 148—*CIL* XVI, 175, 179, 180; year 167—*CIL* XVI, 123.

the years 168–196.¹⁴⁵ There is evidence from the year 110 CE of the stationing of two cohorts of the same name, one in Pannonia Inferior and the other in Dacia.¹⁴⁶ This phenomenon recurred in 139 CE, but in that year, one unit was stationed in Pannonia Inferior and the other in Syria-Palaestina.¹⁴⁷ I believe that, in view of this evidence, it may be argued that the cohort stationed in Syria-Palaestina is identical to the one of the same name that was stationed in Moesia Superior and in Dacia in the year 100 CE. This unit may have arrived in Judaea during the Second Revolt and joined the other units from Moesia Superior that participated in the Second Revolt. The cohort then remained in the region after the year 135, as can be derived from the diploma of 139 CE, and later returned to its permanent station in Moesia Superior.¹⁴⁸

- 2.5 Among the fifteen units mentioned in the diploma of 139 CE, concrete evidence exists only for the stationing of the first Parthian cohort in Judaea from the year 86 CE and in Kurnub in the year 124 CE.¹⁴⁹ Therefore, its participation in the Second Revolt is certain.

3. Units for which there is indirect evidence of their service in Judaea

The units listed below do not appear in the two diplomas mentioned above from Pannonia and Moesia. But in view of indirect evidence, their names have been associated with the Second Revolt.

- 3.1. The omission of a number of *alae* in the diploma of 134 CE from Germania Superior seems to be evidence for the fact that they were transferred at this time from their permanent station to Judaea to take part in the suppression of the revolt.¹⁵⁰ These units (*1 Flavia Gemina*, *1 Scubulorum*, *1 Picentiana*) were stationed in Germania Superior, and their names were indeed omitted from the diploma of 134 CE.¹⁵¹ However, to claim that

145 For evidence of the stationing in Upper Moesia, see year 96—*RMD* I, 6; year 100—*CIL* XVI, 46; This year, the title *CR* was added to its name; year 104/105—*CIL* XVI, 54; year 161—*RMD* I, 55.

146 For evidence from Dacia, see *CIL* XVI, 163.

147 On the unit in Pannonia, see note 41; and in Syria-Palaestina: *CIL* XVI, 87.

148 Spaul, *Cohors*², 293.

149 See above, 38.

150 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 67, no. 25; 68, no. 30, 31; See also Radnoti (above, note 31), 115 note 118.

151 *CIL* XVI, 80; for *1 Flavia Gemina*, see Spaul, *Ala*², 135–136 CE, *1 Scubulorum*, Spaul, *Ala*², 192–194, *1 Picentiana*, Spaul, *Ala*², 185–186 CE.

their omission implies participation in the Second Revolt is too far-fetched. These three cavalry units are mentioned in diplomas for the years 74–82 CE, but it is evident from a diploma of 90 CE that the cavalry force was already reduced and that *I Picentiana* does not appear in it. In 117 CE, a further reduction was made in the number of cavalry units, and in a diploma of this year, only *I Flavia Gemina* and *I Scubulorum* are mentioned. In 134 CE, the province was left with only one ala, *Gallorum Indiana*.¹⁵² It is clear from this that there is no basis for claiming that the omission of these three cavalry units from the diploma of 134 CE indicates their transfer to Judaea. The fact is that *I Picentiana* was not mentioned in the list of cavalry units in Germania Superior since the year 90 CE! On the other hand, it is mentioned in a diploma from Britannia for the years 122–124.¹⁵³ That evidence clarifies that this unit had already left Germania and moved to Britannia in the year 90 CE—or at least no later than the year 122 CE—and did not return to Germania.¹⁵⁴ Moreover, a perusal of the diplomas from Germania Superior shows that in the year 74 CE, when six cavalry units served in the province, a gradual reduction in this force began. In 82 CE, there were five cavalry units; in 90 CE, there were four; in 117 CE, there were two; and in 134, there was only one. In light of these facts, the absence of cavalry units should not be connected with the events in Judaea. Instead, it would be better to assume that there were military considerations that caused the Roman command in Germania Superior to reduce the number of cavalry units.

Therefore, the first assumption, according to which the omission of the units in the diplomas of 134 CE indicated their presence in that year in Judaea, is a baseless assumption. Agreeing with it is tantamount to saying that every unit that was absent during the years 132–135 CE from the place it was permanently stationed was appended to the Roman forces fighting in Judaea. And indeed, in a similar manner Wheeler tried to explain the absence of a number of units from the auxiliary forces that served in Cappadocia during the war campaign against the Alani. In his opinion, these units may have been sent to Judaea. Among the six units that might possibly have fought in Judaea during this period, he listed

152 The diplomas from Germania Superior: year 74—*CIL* XVI, 20; year 82—*CIL* XVI, 28; year 90—*CIL* XVI, 36; year 117—*CIL* XVI, 62; year 134—*CIL* XVI, 80. Spaul, *Ala*², 152–153.

153 On the unit in Britannia, see Frederick Norman Pryce, “A New Diploma for Roman Britain,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 20 (1930): 147.

154 Ernst Stein, *Die Kaiserlichen Beamten und Truppenkörper im römischen Deutschland unter dem Prinzipat* (Wien: W. Seidel & Sohn, 1932), 147.

the cavalry unit *I Augusta Colonorum* and the cohorts *I Germanorum*, *I & II Raetorum*, *III Augusta Cyrenaica*, *III Ulpia Petraeorum*.¹⁵⁵ However, besides the absence of these units from Cappadocia during the period of the Second Revolt, no reliable evidence exists enabling us to connect them with the events in Judaea. Even Wheeler himself noted that there may have been another reason for their absence from the stationary force in Cappadocia.

- 3.2. According to Applebaum, the four cohorts mentioned in a diploma of 134/154 CE¹⁵⁶ (*I Lucensium*, *III Callicorum*, *IIII Gallorum*, and *VII Gallorum*) took part in the suppression of the Second Revolt. The text of this diploma is truncated, and it is difficult to determine whether the units mentioned in it were stationed at this date in Syria or Syria-Palaestina. However, since the cavalry unit *I Phrygum*, which is listed among the units in the diploma, also appears in a diploma of the year 139 CE from Syria-Palaestina, Applebaum seemed to prefer to determine that the units in the diploma of 134/154 CE were stationed there!¹⁵⁷ Yet the number of the cavalry unit on which Applebaum based his claim is unclear. The emendation made by the publisher of the diploma that the number was [VI]¹⁵⁸ was questioned and rejected on the basis of evidence from a diploma recently published. The cavalry unit *I Phrygum* appears among the units included in a diploma of 88 CE from Syria. This means that the unit mentioned in the diploma of 134/154 CE is *I Phrygum* and not *II Phrygum*, whose name appears in the diploma from Syria-Palaestina of the year 139 CE. Therefore, these were clearly two different *alae*,¹⁵⁹ and the first assumption, on which the claim was based that these units took part in the Second Revolt is false and has no bearing on the issue under discussion.

4. Units transferred from Raetia to Judaea

Scholars mention two cohorts from Raetia that they believe had participated in the Second Revolt.¹⁶⁰

155 Wheeler, 190.

156 *CIL* XVI, 103.

157 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 65, no. 4, 10; 66, no. 11, 14; Applebaum, "Bar Kokhba War," 397, note 158 indicates the no. 4 should be deleted in light of a new reading. See also George Leonard Cheesman, *The Auxilia of the Roman Imperial Arm* (Chicago: Ares, 1975), 156, note 1.

158 Hüttel, above, note 139, note 87.

159 Mellor (above, note 114), 181–183; Roxan, *RMD* 1, no. 3.

160 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 65, no. 1, 67, no. 23, following Radnóti (above, note 140), 114–115.

Cohort *I Breucorum* (*CR*.)

This cohort is mentioned in various diplomas from Raetia between the years 107 and 156/157 CE¹⁶¹ and in building inscriptions from Ffünz and from Eining in Raetia dating to the days of Antoninus Pius. The cohort bore the titles *Valeria Victrix Bis Torquata*,¹⁶² and according to Applebaum, these titles were granted to the cohort for their excellence during the Second Revolt.¹⁶³

Cohort *III Augusta Thracum CR*.

In a dedicatory inscription of 144 CE from Gnotzheim in Raetia, this cohort bore the title of *Bis Torquata*, which was interpreted as reflecting excellence in suppressing the revolt in Judaea.¹⁶⁴ Holder, in his comprehensive study on the auxiliary forces, argued that the first title was added to grant citizenship to the two units during the period of Vespasian, while the second one was granted before the period of Hadrian.¹⁶⁵ Maxfield, in her study of the military decorations in the Roman army, claimed that there was no practical method of dating the awarding of decorations or titles to the unit since the sources are not consistent in the use of titles and in the notification of decorations. As an example, she mentioned specifically the cohort *I Breucorum* that, already in 105 CE, was given the additional title *CR*. In a diploma of 117 CE, the title is missing; it is then mentioned once again in sources of the years 121/125 and 144 CE; it is missing again in a diploma of 153/137 CE and is not mentioned again in sources.¹⁶⁶ These facts make it difficult to accept the claim of Radnóti regarding the units from Raetia that participated in the suppression of the revolt in Judaea. Radnóti attached another cohort from Raetia, cohort *III Bracaraugustanorum* (which is also mentioned in the diploma of 139 CE from Syria-Palaestina) to these two units. In his view, this unit from Raetia took part in the suppression of the revolt, remained in the region after it, and then returned to Raetia. However, the prior discussion established that the cohort that was mentioned in the diploma of 139 CE did not arrive in the region from Raetia, but rather from Britannia; therefore, there is no proof that the units from Raetia fought in Judaea during the Second Revolt.¹⁶⁷

161 On the cohort in diplomas from Raetia, see year 107—*CIL* XVI, 55; years 125/128—*CIL* XVI, 32; at this time, the title *CR* was added; year 147—*CIL* XVI, 94; years 156/157—*CIL* XVI, 117.

162 On the inscription, see *IRR* 333; *IBR* 276.

163 Applebaum, above, note 157.

164 See Radnóti, above, note 140.

165 Holder, 37, no. 9 & 10.

166 Maxfield, *Decorations*, 218–219, 226.

167 See above, note 150.

5. Various units with names associated with the Second Revolt:

Cohort I *Thebaeorum*

This cohort was brought to Judaea from Egypt in 105 CE, and after the establishment of Provincia Arabia, was transferred there.¹⁶⁸ This cohort is not mentioned in the diploma of 139 CE, and in my opinion, there is no evidence that links it cohort with the Second Revolt. However, it was found to have been stationed once again in Egypt in 156/161 CE.¹⁶⁹ Furthermore, if this cohort is included among the auxiliary units that fought in Judaea, should not the cohort I *Hispanorum* also be included? Both were brought together to Judaea and were then transferred from there to Arabia.

Cohort V *Augusta CR. Sebastena*

There may be some evidence about this cohort from the inscription in Samaria.¹⁷⁰ But the reconstruction of the inscription is uncertain: *Coh. V [Augustae?] CR. [Sebastenorum]*. And the inscription contains nothing that can link it specifically with the period of the Second Revolt.

Cohort I *Vindelicorum M. CR. Pia Fidelis*

This cohort was stationed in Germania Inferior at the beginning of the Flavian period and was transferred from there to Pannonia.¹⁷¹ It is mentioned for the first time in a diploma of 100 CE in Moesia Superior.¹⁷² It is mentioned later in diplomas from Dacia during the years 110–157 CE.¹⁷³ In the last diploma, among the names of demobilized soldiers, the name *Barsimso Callistenis F. Caes[area]* is mentioned. The name of the soldier was *Samso[n] son of Callistenes*, and the reference to Caesarea was the basis for the claim that the cohort was stationed in Caesarea, Judaea, in the year 132 CE. The reference also supports the claim that the soldier was recruited in Caesarea in that year because the cohort has suffered heavy losses in the first stages of the revolt.¹⁷⁴ But, in opposition to this interpretation, stands the fact that it was not an unusual phenomenon for soldiers of Eastern origins to serve in units stationed in Dacia. Thus, the refer-

168 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 66, no. 20.

169 CIL, XVI, 184.

170 Avi-Yonah (above, note 129), 94–95.

171 On the history of the cohort, see Jan Beněš, *Auxilia Romana in Moesia atque in Dacia: Zu den Fragen des römischen Verteidigungssystems im Unteren Donaauraum und in den angrenzenden Gebieten* (Praha: Academia, 1978), 55–56.

172 CIL, XVI, 4. 6.

173 On the cohort in diplomas from Dacia, see year 110—CIL, XVI, 163; year 144—CIL, XVI, 90; year 157—CIL, XVI, 107.

174 Applebaum, “Causes,” 386, note 94.

ence to Caesarea does not necessarily imply that the soldier was recruited just at the time when the unit was staying there.¹⁷⁵

Ala (I Flavia Gaetulorum?) Flavia Gaetulorum

The name of this cavalry unit is associated with the events of the Second Revolt through the name *Sextus Attius Senecio*. As mentioned previously, he served in Judaea in the position of tribune in the legion *x Gemina*, and his previous service as prefect of a cavalry unit is not connected to the events of the Second Revolt.¹⁷⁶ The claim that Sextus Attius Senecio brought more than one ala, which presumably indicates the possibility that the cavalry unit was attached to a squadron of the legion *x Gemina*, is not certain¹⁷⁷ because (also as previously mentioned,) the composition of the transferred units was variable and the reference could have been to two squadron units of the legion *x Gemina* that were brought from Pannonia Superior.

Additionally, it is not possible to identify the cavalry unit *Flavia Gaetulorum* as the cavalry unit *I Gaetulorum Flavia*. The former had fought in Judaea under the command of Vespasian during the Great Revolt, remained in Judaea, and is mentioned in a diploma of 72 CE.¹⁷⁸ When Provincia Arabia was established, *Flavia Gaetulorum* was attached to the stationary forces in the new province, as is evident in various testimonies from Arabia.¹⁷⁹ The name of this cavalry unit appears in a dedicatory inscription on the altar from Tomis in Moesia Inferior.¹⁸⁰ According to the inscription, Sedatius Apollonius was appointed as prefect of the unit. In order to differentiate it from the cavalry unit *I Flavia Gaetulorum*, which was stationed in Moesia Inferior, the place where it was stationed is noted in the inscription: *en Arabia*, which means *in Arabia*. The first cavalry unit should not be confused with the second one that was stationed in Pannonia Inferior during the years 114 and 151/160 CE.

Cohort IIII Lingonum

The participation of this cohort in the Second Revolt is connected with the name of Marcus Statius Priscus, who served in the position of prefect of the cohort and as a tribune of the legion *III Gallica*. He received decorations from

175 Kraft, Konrad. *Zur Rekrutierung der Alen und Kohorten an Rhein und Donau* (Bernae: Aedibus A. Francke, 1951), 191, no. 1930.

176 See above, 306.

177 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 67, no. 26.

178 See above, note 7.

179 Speidel (above, note 48), 705.

180 *SEG* 24 (1964) no. 112.

Hadrian for his part in the Second Revolt. As established previously, there are difficulties in determining in which capacity Priscus won his decorations. The participation of legion *III Gallica* in the Second Revolt is certain. As for the cohort, it was stationed in Britannia during the years 103–146 CE, but it may have been brought over to Judaea by order of Julius Severus and returned to Britain after the revolt was suppressed.¹⁸¹

Cohort *I Claudia Sugambrorum (Veterana) E*.

Applebaum said that this cohort was transferred from Moesia after the year 134 CE and was stationed in Syria in 157 CE.¹⁸² From this information, can anything be learned about its participation in the Second Revolt? Roxan questioned the identification between the cohort that was stationed in Moesia and the one that was stationed in Syria in 157 CE.¹⁸³ The cohort stationed in Syria did not have the title *Veterana*, a fact that obliges a historian to make a distinction between the two units. The cohort from Moesia, *I Sugambrorum Veterana* was already in existence during the period of Tiberius; and under the reign of Claudius, the title *Claudia* was added to its name.¹⁸⁴ The cohort stationed in Syria, *I Sugambrorum Tironum*, appears in a diploma from Moesia dated to the year 78 CE.¹⁸⁵ Later, this cohort disappeared from the lists of auxiliary units in Moesia because it was transferred at an early date to Syria in connection with the Parthian wars. The cohort remained in Syria and appears in a diploma of 156/157 CE.¹⁸⁶ An inscription from Ishekli¹⁸⁷ suggests that M. Julius Pisonianus, the commander of the cohort *I Sugambrorum Veterana E*. from Moesia, transferred it to Phrygia, and stationed it there in Eumenia. Perhaps it was on its way to Judaea and joined the squadrons sent by the legions from Moesia to take part in the suppression of the revolt. Later, the cohort returned to Moesia Inferior, as testified to in a diploma from Brestovene.¹⁸⁸

181 See above, 295.

182 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 66, no. 19.

183 Roxan, *RMD*, I, 73, note 2.

184 Tacitus, *Annals*, 4, 47. Roxan, *RMD*, I, no. 2, a diploma dated to 75.

185 On its stay in Syria, see *CIL*, XVI, 106; for Moesia, see *CIL*, XVI, 22.

186 For reasons of the omission of the title *Tironum* from the name of the cohort stationed in Syria, see Roxan, *RMD*, I, 73, note 2.

187 See William H. Buckler, William M. Calder, C.W.M. Cox, "Asia Minor Monuments from Central Phrygia," *Journal of Roman Studies* 16 (1926): 74–78, no. 201.

188 Roxan, *RMD*, I, 50. See also, above, note 139, 253, against the possibility that the unit participated in the suppression of the revolt in Judaea.

The Sixth and Twelfth Cohorts from Pannonia Superior

An inscription on an altar from Sebastia, which was dedicated to Jupiter by the auxiliary soldiers belonging to the sixth and the twelfth cohorts from Pannonia Superior, serves as possible evidence that these two cohorts participated in the battles that raged in Judaea during the course of the Second Revolt.¹⁸⁹ However, this evidence raises a number of difficulties. First, there is no additional proof of the presence of these units in Judaea before the Second Revolt. Second, the inscription was dated to the years 195–199 CE, and therefore no connection exists between it and the events of the Second Revolt.¹⁹⁰

Cohort I *Hispanorum M. Eq.*

This cohort was established by order of Hadrian in 119 CE and was stationed in Maryport in Britannia. At the beginning of the third decade of the second century, the cohort was split into two parts. One remained in Maryport, and the other perhaps accompanied Julius Severus, the governor of Britannia, to Judaea to suppress the revolt.¹⁹¹ Although there is no direct evidence for this, Maxfield tried to derive it from an altar inscription in Maryport by M. Censorius Cornelianus, the prefect of the cohort and also a centurion in the legion *x Fretensis*. In her opinion, a connection can be made between the two positions that he held. The cohort fought alongside Julius Severus in Judaea and then returned to Britannia, but its prefect remained in Judaea and was appointed a centurion in the legion *x Fretensis*.¹⁹²

Ala I *Augusta Gemina Colanorum*

In an inscription from Saldæ in Mauretania, a description is given of the career of Sextus Cornelius Dexter, who was awarded decorations and *Vexillum* and *Hasta Pura* by Hadrian for his excellence in the Jewish war.¹⁹³ It is not clear from the inscription itself whether he received the decorations during his service as a commander of the Syrian fleet or during his service as a prefect of the cavalry unit *I Augusta Gemina Colanorum*. In the opinion of a few scholars,

189 See ILS 9132. See also D.J. Lyon, "The Harvard Expedition to Samaria," *Harvard Theological Review* 2 (1909), 110–111. Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 240.

190 See H. Van Weerd, "Un vexillation des chortes auxiliaires de la Pannonie Superieure," *AC* 7 (1938): 81–85.

191 Holder, 118.

192 *CIL*, XVI, 371 = *RIB* 814; R. Davis, "Cohors I Hispanorum and the Garrison of Maryport," *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmoreland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society* 77 (1977): 8–9; See Maxfield, *Decorations*, 195–196. Birley, *Hadrian*, 274.

193 *CIL*, VIII, 8934 = *ILS* 1400.

he won them for his excellence in the maritime events that occurred during the course of the Second Revolt. In their view, the awarding of these decorations shows that the sea battles were decisive, since Hadrian awarded decorations and marks of excellence with a tightfisted hand. But these assumptions are difficult to accept: There is no evidence at all in the sources about sea battles conducted during the Second Revolt.¹⁹⁴

In her study on military decorations in the Roman army, Maxfield proved that Hadrian was indeed miserly in his distribution of marks of excellence to his senior commanders. However, this was not the situation with regard to his lower-ranking officers.¹⁹⁵ Therefore, accepting the assumption that Dexter received his decorations as the commander of the Syrian fleet still does not prove that there were sea battles. It would be preferable to attribute the decorations to his excellence in transporting soldiers to Judaea, a complicated operation in itself.¹⁹⁶ Since the marks of excellence Dexter received were not appropriate for a fleet commander,¹⁹⁷ it is better to claim that Dexter was decorated as a prefect of the cavalry unit during its service in Judaea and that because of his excellence, he was appointed as commander of the Syrian fleet only after the suppression of the revolt.

Our knowledge about the legions and the auxiliary units that were mentioned in research on the Second Revolt as definite or possible participants in the suppression of the revolt is extremely partial. From a long list of twenty legions stationed throughout the Roman Empire that were named as associated with the events in Judaea, there exists evidence for only three legions taking part in full force in suppressing the Bar Kokhba revolt. Two of them were legions that were permanently stationed in Judaea: *Legio X Fretensis* and *Legio VI Ferrata*. The third legion, *Legio III Gallica*, was summoned from neighboring Syria to assist them. For six other legions, there exists enough evidence to assume that they were represented during the course of events in the Second Revolt only by squadrons. However, there is no possibility of determining or estimating what the size of these units might have been. The neighboring provinces Arabia and Egypt sent squadrons from the legions that were stationed in them: *III Cyrenaica* from Arabia and *II Traiana* from Egypt. Squadrons were sent from *Legio V Macedonica* and from *XI Claudia*, both stationed in Moesia

194 *CIL* VI 1565.

195 Maxfield, *Decorations*, 74–76, 150.

196 See Smallwood, 449, for reference to the maritime activities for the protection and reconquest of the coastal cities from the rebels.

197 Michael G. Jarrett, "An Album of Equestrians from North Africa in the Emperor's Service," *Epigraphische Studien* 9 (1972): 173, no. 48.

Inferior. Another squadron from Legio *XII Fulminata* arrived from Cappadocia, and a squadron from Legio *X Gemina* was sent from Pannonia Superior.

With regard to the 42 auxiliary units that I reviewed, 9 *alae* and 33 cohorts, most of the evidence about them does not allow for their connection with the Second Revolt at all. Only for the one cohort *I Thracum* is there concrete evidence that it was stationed in Judaea during the Second Revolt. Also, for 7 other cohorts, there is direct or indirect evidence that may link them with the Second Revolt. Three of them originated from Britannia and may have been brought over to Judaea as part of the reinforcement that arrived with Julius Severus: *I Hispanorum*, *III Bracaraugustanorum*, *IV Lingonum*. Two cohorts—*I Claudia Sugambrorum* (*Veterana*) *E.* and *I Montanorum*—came together with additional forces brought over from Moesia Inferior. The cohort *I Augusta Gemina Colanorum* fought in Judaea under the command of Cornelius Dexter. And another cohort, *IV Bracaraugustanorum*, may have been staying in Judaea before the Second Revolt and may even have taken part in it.

I do not intend to claim that the units I listed above constituted the entire Roman force that suppressed the Bar Kokhba revolt. But, at the same time, in view of the evidence available today, there is no justification for a significant enlargement of the Roman force because any attempt of this kind would involve the use of far-reaching assumptions and conjectures that will not withstand criticism.

Taking into consideration the limited territorial range of the Bar Kokhba revolt, which was focused mainly in the restricted sphere of Judaea, any attempt to magnify the number of Roman or Jewish fighters requires great caution. One must take into account the direct ratio between the range of the Second Revolt and the number of fighters that participated in it on both sides. For example, the initial stages of the Great Revolt took place during the years 66–73 CE in all parts of Provincia Judaea. Yet, the Romans allocated for its suppression only three legions with the accompaniment of 23 cohorts and 6 cavalry units, all under the command of Vespasian. Therefore, in the Second Revolt, which was more limited in scope, there is no reason to envision the composition of the Roman army in the region that was enlarged in excess of its territorial range. A state of relative quiet prevailed throughout the Empire during the period of the Second Revolt. Yet so, it is difficult to assume that the Romans assigned more forces than were necessary to suppress the revolt.

I have no intention of ignoring the information about Roman losses during the course of the revolt. These losses were described by Cassius Dio: “Yet even many Romans fell in this war, and therefore Hadrian, in writing to the Senate, did not use the customary opening words of the Caesars—“I trust that you and your sons are well. I and the army are well” and commented on by Cornelius

Fronto: "And again in the days of the reign of Hadrian your Grandfather many soldiers were killed by the Jews and many soldiers by the Britons." These testimonies indicate the difficulties encountered by the Romans during the suppression of the revolt. But in my opinion, they have no relation to the number of fighters and the size of the forces that were at the disposal of the Roman command. The setbacks that the Romans endured, at least in the initial stages of the uprising, resulted from their war methods, which were ineffective against the tactics employed by the Jewish rebels. The Romans were successful only with the arrival of Julius Severus, who was experienced in mountain warfare and knew how to adapt the Roman military methods to the field conditions and to the fighting style of the rebels. His success in suppressing the Jewish rebellion was not the result of the number of his forces but of the use he made of small units that eliminated the Jewish nests of opposition.

The meager amount of information about the Roman army that fought in Judaea does not enable us to reach extensive conclusions about the exact composition of this army. At this stage, we can only hope that archaeological finds in the future will enrich our knowledge, both concerning the Roman army and about the Second Revolt.

3.3 The Roman Army Manpower in Judaea during the Revolt

Can the information about the legions and auxiliary units mentioned in connection with the Second Revolt previously presented serve as the basis for estimating the number of Romans who fought in the war of suppression? Such an estimation would be highly problematic because no definite information about the various stages of the revolt and the units that fought in them at different times exists. There is, however, one certain fact: Legio x Fretensis and Legio VI Ferrata were two legions that were stationed in the province when the revolt broke out. Both of them must have participated in its suppression. Moreover, adopting the previously mentioned assumption that, at a certain stage in the revolt, Legio III Gallica from Provincia Syria fought in its full complement, leads to the conclusion that fifteen thousand soldiers (from the three legions) contributed to the war effort. And, as previously mentioned, six other legions from different provinces only sent units of about five hundred soldiers, accounting for the addition of up to about three thousand fighters. So the number of legionaries who fought during the Second Revolt totals approximately eighteen thousand soldiers.

To this figure, should of course be added the auxiliary soldiers already stationed in Judaea. The number of auxiliary units mentioned in the two diplo-

mas from Syria-Palaestina delineate the total. The first diploma was dated to the years 136–137;¹⁹⁸ and the second, to 139.¹⁹⁹ The same fifteen units are mentioned in both diplomas. Some of these units were located in Provincia Judaea from the time they were attached to the auxiliary forces in the province after the suppression of the Great Revolt. A few of them may have arrived especially to take part in the Second Revolt. A study of the diplomas published between the years 136 and 160 indicates that hardly any changes were made in the auxiliary forces that were stationed in the country during that time. The fifteen units included three cavalry units and twelve cohorts, among which there were two milliaria cohorts and two cohorts with the title of *Civium Romanorum*. On the basis of knowledge concerning the size of this type of unit, it may be asserted that the auxiliary forces stationed in the country during the Second Revolt comprised about 9,500 soldiers. Adding up the various figures effectuates a grand total: 27,500 Roman soldiers fought on the Roman side.

The next relevant question: How many rebel soldiers fought on the side of Bar Kokhba? Jewish sources mention various and exaggerated numbers on this subject. For example, the Jerusalem Talmud tells of the recruitment of four hundred thousand fighters who were in Bethar during the siege of the city. Half of them were recruited after they stood the loyalty test of a severed finger; and the other half, after they had uprooted a cedar of Lebanon while riding a horse.²⁰⁰ But in view of the existing information about the extent and size of Bethar, how can this number be given any credence? Another number refers to the twenty-four thousand disciples of Rabbi Akiba who, according to researchers, were actually soldiers who fought and died in the revolt.²⁰¹

198 *RMD* III 160 = Russell, 136–137.

199 *CIL* XVI 87.

200 *TJ*, Ta'aniot, 4:5: "Ben Kozebah was there, and he had 200,000 troops who had cut their little finger... Whoever cannot uproot a cedar of Lebanon while riding on his horse will not be registered in your army. So there were 200,000 who qualified in one way, and another 200,000 who qualified in another way."

201 *TB*, Yevamot, 62b: "It was said that R. Akiba had twelve thousand pairs of disciples, from Gabbatha to Antipatris; and all of them died at the same time because they did not treat each other with respect." See also a parallel tradition: *Genesis Rabba* 61:3; *Ecclesiastes Rabba*, 11:10; *Tanhuma*, 6; *Tanhuma Buber*, Hayyei Sarah 8, 122–123; see also *Avot de Rabbi Natan*, version A 3:6 S. Shechter ed., 16. See Efron, "Bar-Kokhva," 57–58; Oppenheimer, "Tannaitic Benei Beraq, A Peripheral Centre of Learning," in *Between Rome and Babylon*, 71.

3.4 Number of Roman and Jewish Fatalities

In lieu of exact facts about the size of the rebel and Roman armies in the revolt, perhaps the number of losses during its course can aid an approximation. Cassius Dio, in his description of the outcome of the Second Revolt, gave a precise report on the number of Jews who fell in the revolt: “Very few Jews in fact survived. 580,000 were killed in the various engagements or battles.” But Dio does not indicate those who died from plagues or diseases in connection with the revolt: “As for the numbers who perished from starvation, disease or fire, that was impossible to establish.” In addition, he noted that “fifty of their most important outposts and 985 better known villages were razed to the ground.” These numbers raise many doubts, mainly in relation to the proportion of the victims to the general size of the Jewish population and its ability to recruit rebels.²⁰²

As for the Roman losses during the battles, Cassius Dio does not give a number, but merely noted that there were “many”: “**Many** Romans, moreover, perished in this war.” Although he does not indicate the number of victims, he continues to write in this connection: “Therefore Hadrian, in writing to the Senate, did not employ the opening phrase commonly affected by the emperors, ‘If you and your children are in health, it is well; I and the legions are in health.’” These words turn the question regarding the number implied by the word “many” into a central issue in understanding the revolt and its intensity.

3.5 Emergency Measures Taken during the Revolt

The Roman garrison of Judaea comprised two legions, the auxiliary units, and the legions and detachments from distant and neighboring provinces that came to strengthen it. The garrison was under the command of Tineius Rufus, the governor of the province since 129, and it failed in the clash against the Jewish rebels. The heavy losses during the first phase of the Revolt constituted a military catastrophe. According to Eck, it created a state of emergency in the Roman Empire in general and in Judaea and the neighboring provinces in particular. This crisis forced Hadrian to handle it by imposing many emer-

202 See Walter Scheidel, *Population and Demography*, Princeton/Stanford Working Papers in Classics, version 1.0, April 2006, Stanford University.

gency measures.²⁰³ He evaluated the crises, the emergency measures, and the strength of the Revolt through the following factors:

3.5.1 *The Transfer of Navy Soldiers to the Legions in Judaea: The Evidence of a Papyrus and Diplomas*

In recent years, some scholars have tried to find answers to demographic questions in military diplomas,²⁰⁴ those discharge documents for auxiliary soldiers and naval troops that were granted between the years 159–162. These soldiers were recruited twenty-five or twenty-six years earlier (i.e., between the years 133 and 136), and their recruitment was linked with the events of the Bar Kokhba revolt.

The first evidence of this kind of possible connection had already emerged in 1928 with the publication of a papyrus document from Caesarea that was dated January 22, 150, the consulate year of Squilla Gallicianus and Carmininius Vetus.²⁰⁵ The papyrus contains a petition (*libelus*) submitted by twenty-two veterans of Legio X Fretensis, who had originated from Alexandria, Egypt, to the governor of Provincia Syria-Palaestina, D. Velius Fidus²⁰⁶ and the answer given by the latter to their request. The petitioners noted that they were recruited (in the consulate year of Manius Acilius Glabrio and C. Bellicus Flaccus Torquatus Tebanianus [124 CE] and of Marcus Lollius Paullinus Decimus

203 See Eck, 79, note 18. Since 2010, he relates the emergency actions to the fact that Hadrian was personally in the war theatre during this phase of the war and that he initiated certain emergency measures as a result of his personal impression of the crisis. See Werner Eck, Paul Holder, Andreas Pangerl, "A Diploma for the Army of Britain in 132 and Hadrian's Return to Rome from the East," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 174 (2010): 189–200; Eck, *Rom und Judaea*, 118–120.

204 For a general introduction to military diplomas, See Andreas Pangerl in <http://www.romancoins.info/MilitaryDiploma.html>.

205 See *Papiri Greci e Latini de Florence*, Florence 1928, no. 1026; *CIL*, XVI, 146, no. 13. *CPL* 117; Sergio Daris, *Document per la storia dell' esercito in Egitto*, Milan, Societa editrice Vita e pensiero, 1964, 94–200. For an English translation, see Brian Campbell, *Roman Army, 31 BC–AD 337, A Sourcebook* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 201–202, no. 329. For the history of the papyrus research, see David J. Thomas "The Subscriptions in *PSI* IX 1026 and *P. Oxy.* XLVII 3364," *TYCHE* 18 (2003): 201–206; Bernhard Palme, "Die classis praetoria Misenensis in den Papyri," in *Italo—Tusco—Romana. Festschrift für Luciana Aigner-Foresti zum 70. Geburtstag am 30. Juli 2006*, eds. Petra Amann, Marco Pedrazzi, Hans Taeuber (Wien: Holzhausen Verlag, 2006): 296–298.

206 The publishers of the papyrus identified the governor with Vilius Kadus. Following Rea's, work he is identified as D. Velius Fidus. See John Rea, "Two Legates and a Procurator of Syria-Palaestina," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 26 (1977): 217–222; *Année Epigraphique* 1976, no. 689; Smallwood, 437, 551.

Valerius Asiaticus Saturninus II and L. Epidius Titius Aquilinus [125 CE]) to the navy and served in the *classis Praetoria Misenensis*. During their service, they were transferred, through the generosity of Hadrian, to Legio x Fretensis, and for over a period of twenty years, they were good soldiers. They were recently discharged and requested permission to return to their native city, Alexandria, in Egypt, and to be released from the Roman army not as navy servicemen but as legionaries. They asked the governor to provide them with a written testimony (*instrumentum*) that would be useful to them in case of need when they came before the prefect of Egypt (*praefectus Aegypti*). They were indeed discharged as legionary soldiers and not as navy servicemen. In answer to their petition, the governor said that although it was not the accepted practice to give a written document or certificate to veterans to attest to their service in the legion, he would grant them their request and provide them with such a testimony. Any evidence for attributing this papyrus to the events of the Bar Kokhba revolt is circumstantial, and scholars are divided regarding the period in which these twenty-two soldiers joined the legion: some ascribed it to events before the revolt and some to the period during the course of the revolt.²⁰⁷ For example, Vitelli Girolamo, the editor of the papyrus, claimed that the transfer of the navy servicemen to the Tenth Legion occurred in response to the Second Revolt.²⁰⁸ On the other hand, Gedaliah Alon devoted a detailed discussion to

207 Margaret Roxan, "A Diploma of the Misene Fleet 160 Feb. 7," in *Römische Inschriften—Neufunde, Neulesungen und Neuinterpretationen: Festschrift für Hans Lieb zum 65. Geburtstag dargebracht von seinen Freunden und Kollegen*, eds. Regula Frei Stolba, Michael Alexander Speidel (Basel: F. Reinhardt, 1995): 110.

208 Attilio Deggrassi, "Il papiro 1026 della societa italiana e i diplomi militari romani," *Aegyptus* 10 (1929): 242–254. Chester G. Starr, *The Roman Imperial Navy 31 BC–AD 324*, 3rd ed., Chicago, Ill. Ares Publisher, 188. Peter Thomsen, "Die Römische Flotte in Palästina-Syrien," *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 68 (1951): 80–81. James Frank Gilliam, "The Veterans and Praefectus Castrorum of the II Traiana in AD 157," *American Journal of Philology* 77 (1956): 362, note 13; Ditmar Kienast, *Untersuchungen zu den Kriegsfлотten der Römischen Kaiserzeit* (Bonn: R. Habelt, 1966), 96; Smallwood, 437; Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 19. Birley, *Hadrian*, 274. John C. Mann, Margaret M. Roxan, "Discharge Certificates of the Roman Army," *Britannia* 19 (1988): 342–343 (= John C. Mann, *Britain and the Roman Empire* (Norfolk: Variorum 1996), 31–31. Idem, "Honesta Missio from the Legions," in *Kaiser, Heer und Gesellschaft in der Römischen Kaiserzeit, Gedenkschrift für Erik Birley*, eds. Géza Alföldy, Brian Dobson, Werner Eck (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2000): 156. They dated the transfer after the subduing of the Second Revolt. See also Barbara Pferdehirt, "Die Rekrutierung von Legionssoldaten unter Hadrian. Eine andere Deutung einer außergewöhnlichen Bürgerrechtskonstitution aus dem Jahr 121," in *Im Dienste Roms, Festschrift für Hans Ulrich Nuber*, ed. Gabriele Seitz (Remshalden: Verlag Bernhard Albert Greiner, 2006): 269–271. She adopted Mann and Roxan's dating.

the period of transfer for the soldiers from the navy to the legion, and attributed it to the fact that “in the year 128 or 129, there was a rebel movement or serious unrest in Judaea that required a bolstering of the stationary force.” This means that he dated their transfer to an earlier time and dissociated their joining of the legion from the events of the Second Revolt.²⁰⁹

A turning point in evaluating the papyrus occurred in 1999 with the publication of a comprehensive article by Eck on the Bar Kokhba revolt: “This state of emergency is reflected in yet another striking measure: the sudden transfer under Hadrian of a **considerable number of soldiers** from the classis Misenensis to the **legio x Fretensis** in Judaea. Since the possession of Roman citizenship was a prerequisite for enrolment in the legions (but not for service in other units of the Roman army, such as the two Italian fleets, the classis Ravenna and the classis Misenensis), this meant that these marines were given civitas Romana on joining the Tenth Legion. The Roman high command would not have authorized such a **wholesale transfer of soldiers** from the fleet to a citizen-unit, a legion, had the situation not seemed grave. Not even Hadrian, who lavishly bestowed the civitas Romana on provincials, would have gone so far under normal circumstances.”²¹⁰

My article on the geographical extent of the revolt, which was published in 2003, was mainly a general criticism of that 1999 article by Eck. On the issue of the papyrus under discussion, I claimed that evidence dated it to before the events of the Second Revolt, and that it indicates only that among the soldiers of Legio x Fretensis there were some of Egyptian origin. But from the numbers given in the papyrus, it cannot be assumed that this legion in Judaea was reinforced because of the critical situation that prevailed in the province before the revolt.²¹¹

Since the publication of my views, Eck criticized my explanation of the transfer of the navy servicemen to Legio x Fretensis and its implications in understanding the Second Revolt. Most of his critique is contained in the article that he published in 2006,²¹² in which he expostulated mainly against my disregard for the twelve military diplomas of February 7, 160, and the three

209 Alon, *History*, II, 6–7. See above, 61–63.

210 See Eck, “Roman Point of View,” 79–89.

211 On Egyptian soldiers who served in *Legio x Fretensis*, see *JW*, 7, 199; for the years 69/69–93, see *CIL*, XVI, app. 13.37.

212 Werner Eck, Andreas Pangerl, “Die Konstitution für die classis Misenensis aus dem Jahr 160 und der Krieg gegen Bar Kochba unter Hadrian,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 155 (2006): 248–249, and note 20; Mor, “The Geographical Scope of the Bar-Kokhba Revolt,” in *The Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered*, 107ff.

additional diplomas of the same date.²¹³ Both he and Pangerl contend that from these diplomas, one may learn about the large recruitments, mainly from the area of Provincia Thracia, to fill the ranks of the Misene Fleet in the year 134. They argued that the fleet had been depleted after its marines were transferred to fill the gaps created in the two legions that fought in Judaea and suffered serious losses during the revolt.

In some of his research, Eck repeated these arguments. However, he noted that we only have about one-half to one percent of all the diplomas granted to soldiers of auxiliary units in a particular year, and we have to take into account that only about fifty or sixty percent of the soldiers survived the long service of twenty-six years. Therefore, he thought that, in the year 134, between three thousand and six thousand cadets were recruited into the Misene fleet. He also maintained that this recruitment was meant to close the gaps created in the fleet after the transfer of navy servicemen to fill the ranks of the dwindling number of fighters in Provincia Judaea.²¹⁴

Similar conclusions were drawn by Cotton and Eck in relation to the four diplomas from Syria-Palaestina, which were granted on March 7, 160, to the soldiers of the local auxiliary forces. Four of the veterans were recruited in the year 135 in order to make up for the heavy losses in manpower during the course of the revolt. All four of them were recruited from the same province, Provincia Pamphylia. Taking into account the percentage of the number of diplomas that survived and the percentage of the soldiers who remained alive until their discharge, one can conclude that in this year, between eight hundred and sixteen hundred cadets were recruited into the auxiliary forces in Judaea.²¹⁵

Without referring at this stage to the claims made above, I ask whether, at the time that my aforementioned article was published, I had overlooked the information about these diplomas. I searched through the article written by Eck in 1999 for the word *diploma* (the singular form) or *diplomas* (the plural form) and found two mentions of them, in footnotes 15 and 92. However, these two footnotes referred to other diplomas. In footnote 15, the reference was to a diploma dated March 7, 160, from which we learn of the composition of the

213 Eck, "Bar Kokhba Aufstand 132–136," *Judäa-Syria Palästina*, 232.

214 *Rom und Judaea*, 126–132; *Rom Herausfordern*, 30–36.

215 Werner Eck, Hannah Cotton, "Impact of the Bar Kokhba Revolt," *Michmanim* 23 (2011): 7–22 [in Hebrew]. Eck, "Ein Diplom für die Truppen von Syria Palaestina aus dem Jahr 160: Ein Reflex auf die Bar Kokhba Revolte," in *Judäa-Syria Palästina*, 256–265. See also Eck, *Rom und Judaea*, 124–126.

Roman auxiliary forces in Judaea in the year 135.²¹⁶ The other reference, in footnote 92, is to diplomas, one of which had not yet been published when Eck wrote his article, that give us the date for Hadrian's title of *imperator interum Imp. II*.²¹⁷

My criticism on the subject of the transfer of marines of Egyptian origin to the ranks of Legio x Fretensis was directed *only* against the paragraph written by Eck that was previously quoted. I could not have referred, in the criticism I wrote in 2001, to diplomas that have only been published since 2006. It is therefore unreasonable to blame me for my presumed "oversight."

In his 1999 article that dealt with the papyrus, Eck did not mention it in connection with the military diplomas of the navy servicemen—even though one could learn indirectly from those military diplomas of the navy servicemen's transfer to service in Judaea/Syria-Palaestina province. They can also serve as evidence for the servicemen's emergency recruitment to the fleet when some of its marines were sent to serve in Legio x Fretensis. It was only in the publications of 2005 that Eck and his colleagues began to link the papyrus of the year 150 with the diplomas of the year 160. In her 1995 article, "A Diploma of the Misene Fleet: 160 Febr.," Margaret Roxan had already noted the link between this papyrus and the diplomas of 160. She asserted that it testified, in her view, to the recruitment of soldiers from Thracia into the Fleet of Miseneum in the year 134. She believed this recruitment occurred in order to strengthen the fleet after the transfer of its mariners to the ranks of the legions stationed in Judaea, which had suffered heavy losses during the revolt.²¹⁸

Although Roxan's article appeared four years before Eck's article in 1999, he did not quote her article, which could have supported his views. Another example of potential evidence ignored by Eck are the words of Michel Reddé in the memorial volume for Eric Birley, which was published in 2000 (and of which, one of the editors was Eck). Even though Reddé actually dated the

216 See for example, M.M. Roxan in, *RMD* III, no. 173; Werner Eck, "Ein Militärdiplom traianischer Zeit aus dem pannonischen Raum," *Kölner Jahrbuch* 26 (1993): 445–450; Russell, 111–132.

217 Schäfer, 14, note 25, collected the evidence; cf. Russell, *BJ* 195 (1995): 75, note 20. *CIL* II.478 cannot be adduced as proof; the text is an erroneous joining together of fragments that belonged to disparate inscriptions; see L. García Iglesias, *La hipotética inscripción del teatro de Mérida reconstruida por Hubner* (1975), 5ff. (I am grateful to Armin Stylow for this information). The only secure *terminus post quem* until now was a military diploma from 14 April 135, in which Hadrian does not have yet the imp. II. Nor is imp. II displayed in a new (unpublished) diploma dated to 18 May 135 (I am grateful to M. Roxan for this information)."

218 Roxan (above, note 207), 110. See also *RMD*, IV, no. 277.

marines' transfer to the Tenth Legion to the year 125, Eck disregarded Reddé's article on the marines, altogether.²¹⁹

A study of the papyrus reveals certain facts that are not subject to doubt:

- a. The date of the petition is January 22, 150. Therefore, the time of their discharge from the Tenth Legion was in this year or a few months earlier.
- b. The twenty-two soldiers from Alexandria, Egypt, were recruited into the Praetorian Misene Fleet in the year 124.
- c. The twenty-two soldiers served in Legio x Fretensis in Provincia Judaea during the course of the Second Revolt and apparently took part in its suppression. Although the legion suffered losses during the revolt, those twenty-two soldiers were spared and continued to serve in the legion for many years after the suppression in 136.
- d. The twenty-two soldiers were Roman citizens from the time they joined the Tenth Legion.
- e. The discharged soldiers did not want to remain in Aelia Capitolina, where they had been serving, but wished to return to their homeland in Egypt.

So, what is the debate and disagreement about? The main issues are when and what was the cause for the transfer of the marines from their service in the fleet to service in the legion, in which they were good soldiers? In their request, they note a time period, [*a(nnos)*] *super xx*. There is no difficulty at all in translating these words to "over twenty [years]," yet their interpretation is more complicated:

- a. If this means they were transferred to service in the legion *more than 20 years before* the time of their discharge, then the transfer was between the years 125 and 130. In other words, the transfer from the fleet to the legion is not connected at all with the events of the Bar Kokhba revolt.
- b. If by "over twenty years" they mean the entire period of service, both in the fleet and in the legion, then the chronological information has no bearing at all on the time they were transferred to the legion. This transfer could have occurred during the revolt in order to fill in for the losses

219 Michel Reddé, "Les Marins," in Kaiser, *Heer und Gesellschaft in der Römischen Kaiserzeit: Gedenkschrift für Eric Birley*, eds. Géza Alföldy, Brian Dobson, Werner Eck. (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2000): 184: "Un papyrus célèbre rapporte la requête de marins Misénates incorporés en 125 dans le Xe Fretensis et demandant, à cet effet, et contre l'usage, la délivrance d'un diplôme pour attester de leurs droits."

of the legion or at the end of the revolt as a result of the serious losses that the legion suffered during the course of it.

In an article published in 2006, Eck claimed that the chronological notation of [a(nnos)] *super xx* contains no indication of a specific time period for the transfer from fleet to legion. The soldiers wanted to stress the fact that they had fulfilled their obligations loyally for more than twenty years. And immediately following this, he noted that transfers of this kind were made only during periods of crisis, and therefore whoever dates their transfer to the period before the outbreak of the revolt must provide evidence for doing so.²²⁰

In a lecture on the development of the Roman army in Judaea, Eck mentioned the papyrus and also its translation into German: “Da wir, Herr, in der flotte von Misenum und, **nachdem** wir durch die Gunst des vergöttlichen Hadrian in die legio Fretensis versetzt worden waren, **dort** über mehr als 20 Jahre unseren Dienst, wie es guten Soldaten zukommt, versehen haben... (sinngemäße Übersetzung).” Although Eck noted that the translation is not literal but rather an interpretation of its contents, he explained that they served there (*dort*), that is to say *in the legion* for over twenty years.²²¹ And in another lecture that he gave in 2007, Eck dealt once again with the papyrus and its translation into German: “Da wir, Herr, *aus der prätorischen* flotte von Misenum, *in der wir gedient haben*, durch die Gunst des vergöttlichen Hadrian in der legio Fretensis versetzt worden *sind*, und mehr als zwanzig Jahre *alles geleistet haben*, wie es sich für gute Soldaten geziemt, bitten wir...”.²²² In this translation he made no distinction between service in the fleet and service in the legion, but noted that the use of the words *over twenty years* by the veterans refers to their entire period of military service!

The request of the twenty-two soldiers was meant to ensure the realization of their rights as legion veterans: in their letter, they petition the governor of the Syria-Palaestina province to confirm their discharge as legionaries and not

220 Werner Eck, Andreas Pangerl, “Die Konstitution für die classis Misensis aus dem Jahr 160 und der Krieg gegen Bar Kochba unter Hadrian,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 155 (2006), 239–252.

221 Eck, *Rom und Judaea*, 125–127, the translation in note 41. “After we did our duty in the fleet of Misenum, and Hadrian was so nice to transfer us to the leg Fretensis, **where (dort)**, we served for more than 20 years as good soldiers are supposed to do” (sinngemäße Übersetzung) is a translation that catches the sense but is not a word-for-word translation. In 2012, in a summarizing article, Eck uses the same translation again, but this time he declines to mention that it is a “sinngemäße Übersetzung.” See Eck, “Der Bar Kochba-Aufstandes der Jahre 132–136,” 251, note 7.

222 Eck, *Rom Herausfordern*, 30–32.

as navy servicemen. If, by their notation of *over twenty years*, they did indeed mean the entire period of their service, the use of this notation was superfluous because it is quite clear that every soldier served for more than twenty years: twenty in the fleet and twenty-five in the auxiliary unit. It should therefore be assumed that their reference to the period of time of their service was intended to stress that they were good soldiers *specifically* during the years of service in Legio x Fretensis.

Thus, in my opinion, the words in their petition *we conducted ourselves over twenty [years] in every respect as good soldiers should* were meant to stress their military service in the legion in particular, from which the rights granted to them were derived. From their words *that it may be obvious from your affirmation that we have been discharged from this very legion, not from the fleet*, I understand that the number *twenty*, which they specified, refers *only* to their period of service in the legion. Therefore, their transfer from the Misene Fleet occurred either in the year 130, if we accept only *twenty*, or even before it, if we accept the term *over*. Neither interpretation dates their transfer during the Bar Kokhba revolt!

From this discussion, emerges a scenario that has the soldiers recruited into Legio x Fretensis before 130. In the view of certain scholars, the transfer of soldiers from the fleet to the legion during this period is an indication of tensions in Judaea before the revolt that required the reinforcement of the legion at this time.²²³ However, I argue that the papyrus testimony merely shows that among the soldiers of Legio x Fretensis, there were soldiers who had begun their military service in the fleet and were of Egyptian origin. It cannot be assumed, from the numbers given in the papyrus, that any specific reinforcement of the legion in Judaea was caused by a critical situation that prevailed in the province before the revolt.²²⁴

Eck mentioned, among other remarks in relation to my criticism, that I claimed *twenty-two soldiers* were the *entire* number that was transferred to the legion. In his view, *twenty-two* was only a partial count and did not indicate all the marines that were transferred, and not even the number of transferred soldiers of Egyptian origin! In his article, he asserted that over fifty percent of the soldiers that were recruited managed to complete their military service,

223 Alon, *History*, vol. II, 6–7; Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 19; Smallwood, 437; See also Peter Thomsen, “Die Römische Flotte in Palästina-Syrien,” *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 68 (1951): 80–81; Birley, *Hadrian*, 274.

224 On Egyptian soldiers who served in Legio x Fretensis, see *JW*, 7, 199; for the years 69/69–93, see *CIL*, XVI, app. 13.37.

but this percentage is reduced according to the extent of their participation in heavy fighting. Therefore, the number twenty-two certainly does not represent all the soldiers that were recruited into the legion, but only some of the soldiers of Egyptian origin who transferred from the Misene Fleet and did not want to remain in Provincia Syria-Palaestina at the end of their service, but preferred to return to Alexandria.

These are indeed correct assessments, but in my article I did not indicate that these twenty-two were the total number of soldiers! This was, at that time, the *only* evidence! I therefore claimed that one could not presuppose from it that there was a critical situation in Judaea. Even agreement with the remarks of Eck on the life expectancy prospects of a soldier in that period will not lead to arrival at a very high figure. If fifty percent of the soldiers did not survive until their discharge, then there were about forty-five to fifty soldiers of Egyptian origin. And adding that among those who remained alive, about fifty percent preferred to remain in Syria-Palaestina leads to an approximate figure of only fifty soldiers! Consider now the difficulties in recruiting local citizens. The testimony of the papyrus regarding the transfer of navy servicemen to the legion was compared by a number of scholars who draw an analogy between the evidence of the papyrus and the testimony of the diplomas that were granted to soldiers in auxiliary units and to navy servicemen who were recruited during the years of the Second Revolt and were discharged after having fulfilled their course of duty between the years 157 and 160.

Eck and Cotton were aware of this connection and found it worth noting that “even though we did not know about the papyrus from Caesarea, it was clear that an urgent need arose to recruit soldiers into the fleet in 133/134. The papyrus gives us the context and the explanation: the ranks of the fleet were depleted because hundreds of soldiers were transferred to the ranks of Legio x Fretensis and perhaps also to the ranks of the second legion.”²²⁵

In articles that have been published since 2005 on the reinforcement of the Roman army in Judaea during the Second Revolt, Eck, Pangerl, Cotton, and others relied on two types of diplomas:

225 Cotton, Eck, in the Hebrew version in Michmanin, 18; Eck in the German version, *Judäa-Syria Palästina*, 263.

- I. Discharge documents of soldiers who had served in the auxiliary forces in Judaea between the years 132 and 160. One of them is from 157/8,²²⁶ two from February 6, 158,²²⁷ and four from March 7, 160.²²⁸
- II. Diplomas that were granted to soldiers of the Misene Fleet in 160.²²⁹

I. The first three discharge documents, dated to the years 157–158 belonged to soldiers of Thracian origin. one diploma is of 157/158²³⁰ and two diplomas are of February 6, 158.²³¹ Receivers of these diplomas served in ala VII *Phrygum*, and if they had completed twenty-five years of service in the ala, then they must have been recruited in 133, during the early stages of the revolt. The other four diplomas were in reference to the imperial constitution that was granted in the year 160 to all soldiers who had served in Syria-Palaestina and who had, in that year, completed twenty-five years of service in the auxiliary forces. This means that they were recruited in March 135. These four soldiers had served

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- 226 Peter Weiss, "Neue Militärdipome," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 117 (1997): 256–259, no. 15: Konstitution des Antoninus Pius für Syria Palaestina, 157/1. H. 158; *RMD* v, 421. Werner Eck, Andreas Pangerl, "Eine Konstitution für die Hilfstruppen von Syria Palaestina vom 6. Feb. 158 n. Chr.," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 159 (2007): 286–288. *Année Épigraphique* 1997, 1768.
 - 227 Werner Eck, Andreas Pangerl, "Eine Konstitution für die Truppen von Syria Palaestina aus dem Jahr 158," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 157 (2006): 185–191. Werner Eck, Andreas Pangerl, "Eine Konstitution für die Hilfstruppen von Syria Palaestina vom 6. Feb. 158 n. Chr.," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 159 (2007): 283–290.
 - 228 *RGZM* 40; *RMD* III 173. Werner Eck, Andreas Pangerl, "Neue Militärdiplome für die Provinzen Syria und Judaea/Syria Palaestina," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 24 (2005): 101–106. Werner Eck, Andreas Pangerl, "Die Konstitution für die classis Misenensis aus dem Jahr 160 und der Krieg gegen Bar Kochba," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 155 (2006): 249–250. Eck, Cotton, "Impact of the Bar Kokhba Revolt," *Michmanim*, 7–22. See also Eck, *Rom und Judaea*, 124–126.
 - 229 Eck, *Rom Herausfordern*, 32–36, with table on pages 33–34, listing 12 diplomata. Idem, *Rom und Judaea*, 126–131. On pages 128–129, is a table with a list of 13 diplomata dated to 160. Idem, "Der Bar Kochba-Aufstandes," 252–254, and notes 12–13, in which 15 diplomata are listed. Weiss, 16. Konstitution des Antoninus Pius für die Classis praetoria Misenensis, wohl 7. Feb. 160.
 - 230 *Année Épigraphique* 1997, 1786 = *RMD* v 421 = Werner Eck, Andreas Pangerl, "Eine Konstitution für die Hilfstruppen von Syria Palaestina vom 6. Feb. 158 n. Chr.," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 159 (2007): 286.
 - 231 Werner Eck, Andreas Pangerl, "Eine Konstitution für die Truppen von Syria Palaestina vom 6 Feb. 158 n. Chr.," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 157 (2006): 185–191. Idem, "Eine Konstitution für die Hilfstruppen von Syria Palaestina aus dem Jahr 158," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 157 (2006): 283.

in four different units of the auxiliary forces. One of them served in a cavalry unit that also included archers: *Ala Antiana Gallorum et Thracum Sagittaria* (archers).²³² Two served in cohorts *Cohors I Damascenorum Armeniaca*²³³ and *Cohors IV Ulpia Petreorum*;²³⁴ and the fourth one served in a milliaria cohort *I Sebastenorum Milliaria*.²³⁵

All four soldiers originated from southern Anatolia: Lycia, Pamphylia, and Pisidia.

The diploma from the Hecht Museum and the three diplomas of 160 constitute for their publishers a basis for calculating the number of recruits into the auxiliary forces during the course of the revolt. In the opinions of these scholars, only between one to three percent of the diplomas that were issued have survived. Therefore, since four diplomas dated to the year 160 were found, these scholars assumed that, in the same year, between four hundred and eight hundred diplomas were granted to freed soldiers. To this calculation, they added another aspect related to the life expectancy of the soldiers: Because only between fifty and sixty percent of the soldiers survived and completed the twenty-five years of their service, these scholars believed that in the year 135, between eight hundred and sixteen hundred cadets were recruited.

In addition, in their view, these soldiers were recruited by a method of organized mass enforcement through a *delictus* that was held in the region in 133. "It is not reasonable to suppose that within such a short time people living in the vicinity of each other would have volunteered of their own free will to serve in an army that had just recently suffered heavy losses in a neighboring province." Eck also noted the existence of a delegation on behalf of the Roman command to Lycia and Pamphylia, the area of recruitment, with the aim of forcibly recruiting young men to the four units of the auxiliary forces that were active in Judaea in the year 135.²³⁶

I may be willing to concede the number of soldiers that were recruited in Thracia in 135 following the losses among the auxiliary forces that fought in the revolt in Judaea, but what is the basis for the assumptions that the figures are "in accordance with an updated calculation"? What is the source of this

232 Eck, Pangerl, "Neue Militärdiplome für die Provinzen Syria und Iudaea/Syria Palaestina," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 24 (2005): 101–118; Werner Eck, "Eine Militärdiplom für die Auxiliareinheiten von Syria Palaestina aus dem Jahr 160 n. Chr.," *Kölner Jahrbuch* 25 (1993) 451–459 = *RMD* III, 173.

233 *RGZM* I, 40, 41.

234 *Michmanim* 201; Eck, *Judäa—Syria Palästina*, 262.

235 *RMD* III, 173; Eck, Pangerl, above, note 35.

236 Eck, *Judäa—Syria Palästina*, 263–264.



FIGURE 3.5 *The Diploma from the Hecht Museum.*

PHOTO BY OR FIALKOV.

“updated calculation”? Also, what is the basis for the supposition that these soldiers were recruited by mass enforcement? On what sources did they base the existence of a delegation of the Roman command to Anatolia in order to carry out the recruitment? Where is the evidence for the claim that the candidates for recruitment in Lycia and Pamphylia were afraid to enlist in the auxiliary forces in Provincia Judaea? Was not recruitment in the provinces always a means for social and economic mobility that provided the recruits with Roman citizenship (*civitas Romana*) and the rights of legal marriage with a foreign woman (*conubium*)?²³⁷

II. From the year 2006, reports were made of fifteen diplomas granted to the soldiers of the *classis Misenensis* on February 7, 160.²³⁸ Since this is the highest number of diplomas from a single constitution, and on the basis of the calculations presented above, the diplomas were interpreted as evidence for a mass recruitment into the Misene Fleet. If the soldiers of the fleet completed their twenty-six years of military service in 160, this recruitment occurred in 133/134. In view of this, the shortage of soldiers during those years was explained by a transfer of soldiers from the Misene Fleet to Judaea to fill the ranks of *Legio x Fretensis*—and perhaps also those of the other legion, *Legio vi Ferrata*, which had been severely damaged in the first stages of the revolt and was in need of refreshment and refilling of its depleted ranks.

An examination of the fifteen diplomas shows that on February 7, 160, an imperial constitution was granted to all the soldiers of the Misene Fleet who had completed their military service of twenty-six years. These marines were apparently recruited in the region of Thracia, and their discharge was accompanied with the receipt of the diploma that granted them Roman citizenship. Occasionally, the name of a discharged soldier, or the name of his wife, is mentioned in them, and sometimes there is information about their places of residence and origins in the Eastern Balkans.

²³⁷ See Eck, Pangerl, “Konstitution für die *classis Misenensis* aus dem Jahr 160,” 248, note 20. They argued that my interpretations are unsupported by the sources and mainly led by my ambition to interpret everything through my originally minimalist interpretation of the revolt’s intensity. By the same token, I can ask about the accompanied interpretation of the diplomas trying to create some emergency atmosphere accompanied by some creative imagination, directed by their desire to strengthen the power of the revolt!

²³⁸ Eck, *Rom Herausfordern*, 32–36, with table on pages 33–34 listing 12 diplomata. Idem, *Rom und Judaea*, 126–131. On pages 128–129, a table with a list of 13 diplomata dated to 160. Idem, “Der Bar Kochba–Aufstandes,” 252–254, and notes 12–13, in which 15 diplomata are listed. Weiss, 16. *Konstitution des Antoninus Pius für die Classis praetoria Misenensis*, wohl 7. Feb. 160.

All the other conclusions derive from evidence based on an *argumentum ex silentio* and from the relationship that the scholars created between the papyrus dealt with previously and the possibility of the transfer of the marines to service in the legions. But without the papyrus, it would not have been possible to link the evidence of the diplomas specifically with Provincia Judaea, despite the fact that the Bar Kokhba revolt occurred during the years under discussion. Besides this, it is worth noting that the papyrus mentions the transfer of soldiers to service in the legion, but the diplomas do not mention this! The diplomas were given to the soldiers of the fleet, and they contain no evidence at all about these soldiers being transferred to legionary service or to auxiliary units stationed in Judaea! As for those soldiers, if they did serve in Judaea, no evidence of it exists!

In the view of Eck and others, one of the important parameters for discussion is the large quantity of diplomas that was found in the present time that indicate that a large number of diplomas were granted in the past. This quantity testifies to the fact that from the end of 133 to the beginning of 134, it was necessary to conduct an intensive recruitment into the Misene Fleet in the area of Thracia. These marines were brought in to replace the soldiers of the fleet who were sent to Judaea in order to fill the ranks of Legio x Fretensis and other units that had suffered heavy losses in the early stages of the Bar Kokhba revolt. The legion had lost from half to two-thirds of its strength, and therefore the entire process of recruitment in 133/134 into the fleet was carried out in a situation of emergency. In the view of Eck and other scholars, Hadrian preferred to assign the soldiers of the fleet, who had already undergone suitable military training, instead of transferring raw cadets directly into the battlefield.

The heavy losses of the Tenth Legion were caused, in these scholars' view, by its split into small contingents that were found outside the legionary camp in Jerusalem and were easy prey to the rebels who enjoyed the principle of surprise.²³⁹ However, this assumption evokes a number of critical comments: First, there is the military problem, since it is difficult to suppose that Hadrian, after the first defeats in the revolt, would transfer navy servicemen to fight the Jewish rebels. These mariners were given a completely different kind of military training from the training of auxiliary forces, whether they were cavalry or infantry. In order to cope with rebels in Judaea, the Roman army needed soldiers who were trained to fight on land, and especially in mountain warfare.

239 Eck, Pangerl, "Konstitution für die classis Misenensis aus dem Jahr 160," 249: "One could assume something similar for other battalions—above all for auxiliaries—but for this no evidence is available," and what is the evidence for the x Fretensis?

Therefore, the question arises: During the course of the revolt, was there time to train such a large contingent of forces to confront the rebels?

Second is the factual difficulty that derives from the description of Cassius Dio, to which Eck and his colleagues refer so seriously! Their assertion that the Romans fought “mainly by besieging small nests of opposition in hideout caves, more and more of which are being discovered in recent years, the Romans lost many soldiers, both from the legions and from the auxiliary forces” does not correspond with the description of Cassius Dio. According to Dio, the fighting methods used by the Romans were altered only in the second stage of the revolt, when Julius Severus began to use small units against the rebels. From then onward, the Roman army gained military achievements that led to the suppression of the revolt,²⁴⁰ and it may be supposed that it was only at this stage that the number of losses gradually decreased!

Third, the number of losses among the Roman soldiers are mentioned in several ways that also arouse wonder. As previously mentioned, Eck assumed, in view of the diplomas, that Legio x Fretensis had already lost up to two-thirds of its strength, that is to say between 2,700 and 3,240 soldiers, in the first stage of the Second Revolt. He also inferred that, during the same period of 133/134, between three thousand and six thousand marines were recruited into the Misene Fleet to replace a similar number of marines that had been transferred to the damaged legion in Judaea. After twenty-six years, in 160, following a continuous period of service, only fifteen hundred to three thousand survivors of these marines were discharged. Can this really be derived from the fifteen diplomas that were found?

I would like to add another critical comment based on an “*argumentum ex silentio*.” Is it possible that such a large-scale recruitment would not have been mentioned in the sources of that period? For example, would not Cassius Dio, who gave specified numbers concerning the Bar Kokhba revolt, have had some information about the emergency recruitment that perhaps “saved the homeland,” as Eck and Cotton suggested?²⁴¹ If Legio x Fretensis suffered such a serious defeat, the question is why was it not disbanded? After all, the number of

240 Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 69.13.2–3: “Severus did not venture to attack his opponents in the open at any one point (because of their numbers and their desperation). Instead, he intercepted small groups, (which he was able to do thanks to the number of his soldiers and the officers serving under him), and by depriving them of food and shutting them off, he was able, rather slowly, to be sure, but with comparatively little danger, to crush, exhaust, and exterminate them.”

241 Michmanim, 20; Eck, *Judäa—Syria Palästina*, 264–265.

recruits was almost as large as that of a complete legion. And why, for example, were additional forces not transferred from Provincia Syria?

Another question related to the testimony arises from an inscription in Pisaurum, Italy, which mentions an anonymous commander of Legio x Fretensis, who was granted various decorations (consisting of two crowns, a *muralis et vallaris*, and a *hasta pura*) by Hadrian for the part he played in the Jewish revolt.²⁴² Naturally, in view of the description of the legion during the course of the revolt, the question is what was the background for the granting of decorations? What is not clear is how the commander could have won his decorations in spite of the failure of the legion. And as I will discuss later, it was this kind of granting of decorations by Hadrian that served Eck as evidence for the intensity of the revolt.

The quantity of diplomas that were found cannot, in my opinion, constitute a basis for any calculation: either of the number of recruits or of the number of discharged soldiers. For an understanding of this statement, I refer specifically to the general discussion of the diplomas by Andreas Pangerl who claimed that five thousand soldiers served in every auxiliary unit. Assuming they served for the entire period of twenty-five years, there would be twenty soldiers discharged from each unit every year. This means that in a province in which about fifteen auxiliary units were serving, one could expect an annual discharge of about three hundred soldiers. Agreeing with the assumption that only fifty to sixty percent of the soldiers survived the period of twenty-five years still leads us to expect the discharge of 150 soldiers, each of whom would be entitled to a diploma. Pangerl noted, once again, that because of a crisis such as the Bar Kokhba revolt, a larger quantity of diplomas could have been expected in the region. He countered this expectation by ascribing the limited finds of diplomas to economic causes, such as the expensive cost of copper, which in later periods led to the need to melt down the diplomas for additional uses.²⁴³

In fact, the finding of a number of diplomas in the province does not, in my opinion, provide proof of the number of recruits or discharged soldiers in any given year and certainly does not constitute any kind of evidence of the existence of a crisis. Why must fifteen diplomas evoke red flags? Apparently

242 CIL, XI 6339. See Dąbrowa, *Legio x Fretensis*, 42, no. 15; Maxfield, *Military Decorations*, 147–148.

243 See Pangerl, above, note 204, in <http://www.romancoins.info/MilitaryDiploma.html>. See also Ian Haynes, *Blood of the Provinces: The Roman Auxilia and the Making of Provincial Society from Augustus to the Severan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 338–345. He reviewed the difficulties connected with the research on the diplomas.

in every discharge ceremony, at least 150 diplomas were awarded, and the fact that they were not found (while the provenance of those that were found is not clear) places all the conclusions in enormous doubt.

In order to clarify my attitude toward the random finding of the military diplomas, I will quote the evidence of Josephus Flavius regarding the events of the years 70/71:

JW 7, 217:

About the same time Caesar sent instruction to Bassus, and Laberius Maximus, the procurator to dispose of all Jewish land. For he founded there no city of his own while keeping their territory, **but only to eight hundred veterans did he assign a place for settlement called Emmaus. . . .**²⁴⁴

According to Josephus, eight hundred soldiers were discharged from their service in the Roman army in 70/71 and were settled in Motza. A few comments should be made about this evidence. First, Josephus does not indicate whether these soldiers are from the legions or from the auxiliary forces. In both cases, the soldiers were apparently brought to Provincia Judaea at the outbreak of the Great Revolt in 66 CE in order to take part in its suppression. This means that their stay in Judaea was for a relatively short time. It is not known from where these units came to Judaea. And as to when their military service began, if these were legionary soldiers, they were recruited in the year 50, and if they served in auxiliary units they were recruited in 45.

In 71, the only legion in the province was the Tenth Legion, since the other three legions that fought in the Great Revolt had already left Judaea. So the discharged soldiers could only have been of this legion or soldiers in the auxiliary forces or some combination of the two. In any case, in 70/71, there were eight hundred soldiers discharged from military service who had been recruited between the years 45 and 50 CE. It is worth noting that the Roman command released eight hundred soldiers at a time when the war had not ended, since Masada was still in the hands of the rebels!

Following the discharge of eight hundred soldiers, the Romans had two choices. They could either leave a depleted military force in the province or recruit eight hundred soldiers to make up the difference. In the latter instance,

²⁴⁴ Trans. Benjamin Isaac, "Judea after AD 70," *Near East Under Roman Rule*, 114. In the English version, he commented that Emmaus should be identified with Motza, on the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus.

should this be regarded as an emergency recruitment because of the quantity of recruits? Moreover, making use of the various statistics regarding the life expectancy of the soldiers, and in this instance adding the fact that they participated in the suppression of the Great Revolt, then between the years 45 and 50 CE, there was an extensive recruitment into Legio x Fretensis or into the auxiliary forces that fought alongside it that could have totaled between sixteen hundred and two thousand recruits. What is surprising, on the assumption that some of the discharged soldiers were in the auxiliary forces and remained as residents within the area of the province, is the absence of diplomas of this time period, especially in view of the possibility of an enormous number of released soldiers. In addition, no information exists concerning the background of an intensive recruitment during the fourth decade of the first century!

As previously stated, evidence exists for the fact that, since the year 86, the local auxiliary force in Provincia Judaea was relatively large and comprised ten auxiliary units. They even gradually increased in number, and from the year 136, another five units were added. Taking into account all the soldiers who had served in the auxiliary forces and survived the years of their service, we could expect that there were scores of military diplomas, but these unfortunately are not extant!!²⁴⁵

Another example that emphasizes the problematic nature of the random findings of diplomas is the eighteen diplomas that were discovered in connection with the auxiliary forces stationed in Provincia Judaea.²⁴⁶ It seems that few conclusions regarding the number of recruits during periods of peace or periods of crisis can be deduced from them. The diplomas are dated between the years 86 and 186, and can be divided into a few interrelated groups:

1. Three diplomas dated May 18, 86
2. Two diplomas dated November 6, 87
3. Four diplomas dated to different years: 90, 136/137, 139, 142
4. Three diplomas of the year 158—one of 157/158 and two of February 6, 158
5. Four diplomas dated March 7, 160
6. Two diplomas dated to the years 154/161 and to November 24/27, 186

If the multiple diplomas of the years 158 and 160 constitute evidence for an emergency recruitment during the years 133 and 135, then what is testified by

²⁴⁵ For an updated list of diplomas from Judaea and Syria-Palaestina, see Eck, Cotton, *Michmanim*, 21, 18. Diplomas were issued between 86 and 186.

²⁴⁶ See above, 310–325.

the multiple diplomas of 86 and 87? What emergency recruitment was conducted in 61/62 and what was the background for carrying it out?

Apart from Provincia Judaea, and without any connection to the events of the Second Revolt, reference to the five military diplomas from the province Moesia Inferior that are dated to the year 125 and eight other diplomas of the year 99 sheds additional light on an understanding of the diplomas. Apparently, various assumptions, such as emergency recruitment or mass recruitment in preparation for the First Dacian War in 101, can be made from their large numbers. But in this particular case, Eck and Pangerl asserted that these diplomas are proof of the normal process in the Roman army for the recruitment and discharge of soldiers and testify to routine management in a military administration.²⁴⁷

Once again, the prior discussion does not question the fact of the failure of the Romans in the first stage of the revolt when Legio X Fretensis was under the command of Tineius Rufus. What is questioned is mainly the number of Roman losses and recruitments that has been suggested in the research literature based on suppositions that are mostly without foundation.

3.5.2 *Compulsory Conscriptions in the Years 132–136*

Epigraphic evidence from Italy, dated during the first years of the Second Revolt, and derived from areas that, according to Eck, were not the usual places for recruiting soldiers, sheds light on military conscription on the peninsula, which was considered a rare and unpopular step.²⁴⁸

A. Two young senators were involved in the conscription of officers in Central Italy:

A.1. Q. Voconius Saxa Fidus,²⁴⁹ as curator of the Via Valeria Tiburtina, held a *dilectus* there.²⁵⁰ This conscription raises some questions.

²⁴⁷ Werner Eck, Andreas Pangerl, "Eine Konstitution für das Heer von Moesia Inferior vom 1. Juni 125 in Fünf Diplomen," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 188 (2014): 249.

²⁴⁸ See John C. Mann, "The Raising of New Legions during the Principate," *Hermes* 91(1963): 488 (= John C. Mann, *Britain and the Roman Empire* (Norfolk: Variorum, 1996), 6. Mann notes that a *dilectus* was held in Italy only in an emergency situation. See also Birley, *Hadrian*, 274. Eck, 80.

²⁴⁹ On his career, see Rudolph Hanslik, *RE Suup.* IX (1962), 1834. Helmut Halfmann, *Die Senatoren aus dem östlichen Teil des Imperium Romanum bis zum Ende des 2 Jh. N. Chr.* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979), 151, note 62.

²⁵⁰ See *IGR* III.763 = *ILS* 8828: *curatorem viae Valeriae Tiburtinae, qui et pereundem tractum dilectu[m] e[re]git*. See Ismail Kaygusuz, "Eine neue Ehrung für Quintus Voconius Saxa Fidus in Perge," *Epigraphica Anatolica* 2(1983): 37–39; see also *Année Épigraphique* 1986,

First, a conscription run by a curator is uncommon. Second, Italy in general and Central Italy in particular were rarely military recruiting regions. Therefore, scholars argued that the irregular recruitment is a sign of a state of emergency related to the heavy military losses in Judaea during the first phase of the Second Revolt. This situation had forced Hadrian to take unusual steps to replace the personnel losses of the legions in Judaea.²⁵¹

- A.2. T. Caesernius Statianus recruited soldiers in Transpadana.²⁵² Géza Alföldy dated the recruitment to 134 and interpreted it as representing the shortage of soldiers in the legions that fought in Judaea during the Second Revolt.²⁵³
- B. During the period under discussion, the procurator of the province of the Maritime Alps²⁵⁴ was L. Valerius Proculus, who conscripted soldiers in his province.²⁵⁵ Because a *dilectus* had never before been held in this region, Eck connected it with the state of emergency that had resulted from the heavy losses of the army during the revolt.²⁵⁶
- C. A dedicatory inscription, mentioned previously, from the camp of Legio II Traiana in Nicopolis, dated to 157, connected Egypt with the emer-

nr. 686; for evidence on his career in Greek from Phaselis at the Lycian shore, see *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 14 (1890): 64. = *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 28 (1908): nr. 187; *IGR* III 763 = *ILS* 8828, *TAM* II, no. 1201–1201A. On the inscription, see David J. Blackman, “Recent Epigraphical Discoveries at Phaselis,” in *Akten des VI. Internationalen Kongresses für griechische und lateinische Epigraphik*, München 1972 (München: Beck, 1973), 566–568. David J. Blackman, in *Phaselis*, Beiträge zur Topographie und Geschichte der Stadt und ihrer Häfen, ed. Jörg Schäfer (Tübingen: Wasmuth, 1983), 154–159; See Géza Alföldy, *Konsulat und Senatorenstand unter den Antoninen: Prosopographische Untersuchungen zur Senatorischen Führungsschicht* (Bonn: Habelt, 1977), 51.

251 See Blackman (previous note), 567. Eck, 80. Idem, *Rom und Judaea*, 131. Idem, *Rom und Herausfordern*, 29–30.

252 *CIL* VIII, 7063 = *ILS* 1068: T. Caeserino... Statio Quintio Statiano Memmio Macrino... misso ad dilectum iuniorum a divo Hadriano in regionem Transpadanam. See also *Année épigraphique* 1955, 238; On his career, see Alföldy (above, note 54), 347–350.

253 Alföldy, above, note 54, 350. See also Peter A. Brunt, “Conscription and Volunteering in the Roman Imperial Army,” *Scripta Classica Israelica* 1 (1974): 90–115 [= idem, *Roman Imperial Themes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 188–214].

254 On the Maritime Alps, see Jean Prieur, “L’histoire des régions alpestres (Alpes Maritimes, Cottiniennes, Graies et Pennines) Sous le haut-empire romain (1^{er}–11¹ siècle après J.C.),” *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* II, 5.1 (1976): 630–656.

255 *ILS* 1341 = *CIL* 1970. On his career, see Rudolf Hanslik, *RE, Supp.* 15, 213–214, nr. 320. See also Birley, *Hadrian*, 274.

256 See Eck, 80. For a similar understanding, see Blackman (above, note 250), 567.

gency recruitment issue. In the year 132/3, 136 veterans were recruited, 107 of them were enlisted in the western parts of the Empire and only 15 in Italy.²⁵⁷ This conscription was related to the one in Italy previously mentioned, headed by Voconius Saxa Fidus and connected with the state of emergency in Judaea.²⁵⁸

The study of this evidence, however, raises some difficulties: First, if the conscription in Transpadana led by T. Caesernius Statianus took place in 134, it is unlikely that these recruits could have acquired the military skills needed to support Julius Severus during the last phases of the Second Revolt and joined a regular legion within such a short period. Second, the attempt to connect Voconius Saxa Fidus' conscription with the evidence from the inscription from Nicopolis,²⁵⁹ creates some general confusion. According to the inscription, only fifteen soldiers were recruited in Italy! Moreover, the history of Legio II Traiana makes it clear that, after 123, this was the only legion stationed in Egypt.²⁶⁰ Therefore, its support for the war effort in Judaea was very limited.

In light of this information, it is impossible to reach any serious conclusions about the adduced state of emergency resulting from the heavy losses inflicted upon the Roman army. Voconius Saxa Fidus' recruitment is dated to 132, namely, before the outbreak of the revolt and therefore has nothing to do with the Second Revolt. Connecting this conscription to the attachment of soldiers to the *II Traiana* allows for the interpretation as part of the routine of a legion, whereby some of its soldiers completed their long service of twenty-five years.

257 Abdullatif Ahmed Aly, "A Latin Inscription from Nicopolis," *Annals of the Faculty of Aarts, Ain Shams University* 3 (1955): 113–146; *Année épigraphique* 1969/1970, 633; Giovanoni Forni, "La base eretta a Nicopoli in onore di Antonino Pio dai veterani legione II Traiana" in *Esercito e marina di Roma antica, Raccolae di contributi*, ed. Giovanoni Forni (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag, 1992), 142–179.

258 Herbert Devijver, "The Roman Army in Egypt (With Special Reference to the Militiae Equestres)," *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* 11, 1 (1974): 458; John C. Mann, *Legionary Recruitment and Veterans Settlement During the Principate* (London: Institute of Archaeology, 1983), 46–47.

259 John C. Mann, "The Raising of New Legions during the Principate" *Hermes* 91 (1963): 488 [= J.C. Mann, *Britain and the Roman Empire* (Brookfield, Vt.: Variorum, 1996), 7]: Only in emergencies were existing legions brought up to strength by a special *dilectus* in Italy. See also James Frank Gilliam, "The Veterans and Praefectus Castrorum of the II Traiana in AD 157," *American Journal of Philology* 77 (1956): 362, note 16; 366, note 28. He relates it to the events of the Jewish Diaspora Revolt in Egypt.

260 See David L. Kennedy, "Legio VI Ferrata: The Annexation and Early Garrison of Arabia," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 84 (1980): 303–305.

The reason for the recruitment was to restore the strength of the legion. The fact that no soldier was recruited in Egypt reflects the difficulties of recruiting soldiers there.²⁶¹ Likewise, a conspicuous but not surprising fact is that not even one soldier on the list was recruited in Transpadana. There, the conscription by T. Caesernius Statianus took place two years later with no connection with the Second Revolt. The *II Traiana* was formed against the background of the Dacian wars in 105/6.²⁶² Some of its soldiers were released in 132, and the soldiers recruited in this year were released in 157.²⁶³ In light of these dates, it makes no sense to connect the recruitment of 132 to the background of any irregular events. Instead, this should be seen as evidence of a routine conscription designed to complete the composition of the legion.

As for the career of L. Valerius Proculus, several uncertain details cast doubt about the connection and dating of the *dilectus* to his governorship in the Maritime Alpes. Therefore, it is also problematic to attach this recruitment to the Second Revolt. Pflaum, who reviewed L. Valerius Proculus' career, presented a variety of possibilities for the place and date of his position as *dilectator* and suggested that he recruited the soldiers in the province of Baetica (southern Spain), where he later served.²⁶⁴

Again the manpower shortage suffered by the legions in the East is reflected in Hadrian's speech in July 128 before the soldiers of Legio III Augusta, which was then encamped in Lambaesis. Here he praised the legion that sent reinforcements, including one cohort and four soldiers from each of its nine other cohorts. This force joined Legio III Cyrenaica. The need for legionaries originated, according to Kennedy, from the impossibility of recruiting soldiers in the new province of Arabia, in which there were not enough Roman citizens who could be mobilized into a legion.²⁶⁵

261 See Abdullatif Ahmed Aly (above, note 257), 126. See Devijver (above, note 258), 458, who mentions one soldier who was recruited in Egypt.

262 See Mann (above, note 248), 483. He considered the establishment of the Provincia Arabia as another reason for creating the two legions the *II Traiana* and *XXX Ulpia*. See also Lawrence J.F. Keppie, "The Legionary Garrison of Judaea under Hadrian," *Latomus* 32 (1973): 861, and note 13 (= L.J.F. Keppie, *Legions and Veterans, Roman Army Papers 1971–2000* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2000)).

263 On the recruiting cycles, see Abdullatif Ahmed Aly (above, note 257), 129.

264 See Hans-George Pflaum, *Les carrières procuratoriennes équestres sous le haut-empire romain* (Paris: Librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1960), 274–279, no. 113. See also Herbert Devijver, *Prosopographia militarium Equestrium quae fuerunt ab Augusto ad Gallienum*, (Leuven: Universitaire Pers 1977), vol. 2, 825–826.

265 See above, 59–61.

I am not rejecting the arguments about the feeling of emergency and crisis, especially in Judaea on the eve of the Revolt and later, after the military achievements of the Jewish rebels. These feelings however, are not supported strongly by the existing evidence, which only sporadically represents military recruitment on a very small scale. The disappearance of Legio *XXII Deiotariana* in connection with the Bar Kokhba revolt is uncertain and not generally accepted as fact.²⁶⁶ Besides, there is no evidence of changes in the auxiliary units of the garrison of Syria-Palaestina after the suppression of the revolt, i.e., as an outcome of the demolishing of units that had participated in the revolt. Legio VI Ferrata, which originally camped in Rapanea, Syria,²⁶⁷ joined the Judaeian garrison before the outbreak of the revolt and was stationed in Legio.²⁶⁸ The auxiliary units that came along with this legion also originated in Syria. Therefore, I have to reject the argument that these units arrived in the province during or after the revolt to replace the units that were lost in the fighting.²⁶⁹

To conclude this discussion, I repeat that the evidence previously reviewed, including the different diplomas, in regard to the various conscriptions in different places in the empire against the background of the military defeats in Judaea, is isolated and does not represent an intensive and massive recruitment in order to strengthen the units defeated in Judaea.

3.5.3 *The Appointing of Sextus Julius Severus to Governor of Judaea*

The extraordinary transfer of Sextus Julius Severus, the governor of Britain, to the command of the Roman army in Judaea was included among Hadrian's many emergency measures. According to Cassius Dio, "Hadrian sent against them *generals*. *First of these* was Julius Severus, who was dispatched from Britain, where he was governor, against the Jews."²⁷⁰

266 See above, 198–209.

267 On the history of the legion, see Hannah M. Cotton, "The Legio VI Ferrata," in *Les Légions de Rome*, 351–357; on its location, see L.J.F. Keppie, 'Legions in the East from Augustus to Trajan', in *The Defence of the Roman and Byzantine East*, Proceedings of a Colloquium held at the University of Sheffield in April 1986, ed. Philip Freeman, David Kennedy (Oxford: BAR International Series 297, 1986), vol. 2, 423.

268 For evidence that he was stationed before the revolt, see Lehmann-Holum, 74, no. 49; 77, no. 54.

269 See Russell, 88–100.

270 See Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, 59: 12–14, trans. E. Cary, *The Loeb Classical Library*, Cambridge Mass., 1925, vol. VIII, 447–451.

The authenticity of this source was discussed previously.²⁷¹ Nevertheless, Eck treated it as authentic evidence that describes the revolt as a major challenge for the Roman army. He maintained that Roman self-esteem and pride were injured by the temerity of a small nation and insignificant province that dared to revolt for the third time. These feelings were aggravated by the military failures of the first phase of the Revolt and its four-year duration.²⁷² He also argued that, in the past, historians of the Second Revolt ignored these words about Hadrian sending his *best generals* against the Jews. *Generals*—plural—though Cassius Dio continues to describe only one of them, Sextus Julius Severus, the governor of the province Britannia, who was sent to Judaea to crush the Jewish revolt.

The career of Julius Severus is impressive. He held some military appointments in Upper Panonnia in the years 120–126. Afterwards, he was the governor of the praetorian province Upper Dacia. In 127 he was consul. In the years 128–132, he served as governor of a consular province in Lower Moesia. He was later transferred to Britannia, where he had three legions and fifty auxiliary units under his command.²⁷³

How should we interpret the transfer of Julius Severus to Judaea in the year 134?²⁷⁴ According to Eck, the transfer of a high-ranking military administrator such as Julius Severus from a leading province like Britannia to a minor one like Judaea would normally be understood as a punishment and a demotion. In this case, however, the transfer should be interpreted as a sign of the state of emergency in the rebellious province of Judaea, after the military losses there. The irregular appointment of Julius Severus' replacement, Publius Mummius Sisenna, as governor of Britannia is another indication of the state of emer-

271 Stern, *Authors*, II, 391–405. See also Benjamin Isaac, "Cassius Dio on the Revolt of Bar Kokhba," *Scripta Classica Israelica*, 7 (1983/84): 68–76 (= Isaac, *Near East under Roman Rule*, 211–219).

272 See Eck, 78, note 9, in which he cites Yaron Eliav, "Hadrian's Action in Jerusalem Temple Mount According to Dio and Xiphilini Marius," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 4 (1997): 125–144. The reference is to Eliav's view of Xiphilinus about the foundation of Aelia Capitolina and the building of the temple to Jupiter. Eliav argues that the later tension between Jews and Christians influenced the wording of Xiphilini and asserts that Dio should not be relied upon in this matter. Despite this, Eck wrote: "This is not the case with the passage discussed here."

273 Anthony Richard Birley, *The Roman Government of Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 129–133.

274 On the date of the transfer, see Shimon Applebaum, "Tineius Rufus and Julius Severus," in Shimon Applebaum, *Judaea in Hellenistic and Roman Times: Historical and Archaeological Essays* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988), 120–123.

gency. Mummius Sisenna, who had been *Consul Ordinarius* in 133, was an inexperienced administrator with no military experience and had never served as governor before.²⁷⁵ After the revolt, Julius Severus was appointed to govern the province of Syria, a province that suited his military and administrative achievements.²⁷⁶ The transfer of a high-ranking person such as Julius Severus to command the defeated Roman army in Judaea could reflect Hadrian's reaction to the state of emergency in Judaea. However, I rule out the claim that the hurried appointment of Mummius Sisenna also reflects this emergency. It is hard to believe that in the Roman administrative reservoir, a more experienced candidate could not be found. Therefore, it is possible that some other criteria led Hadrian to appoint Mummius Sisenna to the province of Britannia. At the time of his appointment, he was already over fifty; and at times, life experience is as important as military experience. This seems especially true in this case: during his governorship, the province was peaceful, and he was not a military figure.²⁷⁷

Hadrian transferred Julius Severus to the war zone in Judaea to command the defeated local army and its reinforcement. As an experienced general, he was brought to fight the guerilla Jewish rebels with different tactics from those used by the former commanders against the rebels. Cassius Dio confirmed this by saying, "Severus did not venture to attack his opponents in the open at any one point, in view of their numbers and their desperation, but by intercepting small groups, thanks to the number of his soldiers and his under-officers, and by depriving them of food and shutting them up, he was able, rather slowly, to be sure, but with comparatively little danger, to crush, exhaust and exterminate them."²⁷⁸ For Julius Severus' military achievements in Judaea, Hadrian awarded him with the highest military decorations, the *Ornamenta Triumphalia*.²⁷⁹

275 On his career, see Birley, *Fasti*, 109; Karlheinz Dietz, "Die beiden P. Mummii Sisennae und der Wiederaufbau der Basilike Stoa von Thera," *Chiron* 23 (1993): 295–311.

276 See Eck, 79, note 16. Eck raised the question whether he was appointed to Syria or Syria Palaestina. He cited two inscriptions. One was from Burnum, Dalmatia [I]egato pr. pr. [provi]nciae Suriae (*CIL* 111.285 = *ILS* 1560). The second was from Aequeum, in which his governorship in Syria is not mentioned (*Année épigraphique* 19049). Does *Suriae* stand for Syria or Syria-Palaestina?

277 Ronald Syme, "Hadrianic Governors of Syria," in R. Syme, *Roman Papers* IV, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 50–61. Syme lists some appointments in which the considerations were political rather than military ones.

278 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 69, 13, 2–3.

279 On his career, see *PIR*², 576. Anthony R. Birley, *The Fasti of Roman Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 106–109; Edward Dąbrowa, *The Governors of Roman Syria from Augustus to Septimius Severus* (Bonn: Dr. Rudolf Habelt, 1998), 94–96. For the triumphal

3.5.4 *Roman Military Commanders and the Awarding of Ornamenta Triumphalia*

During Hadrian's reign there were wars all over the empire: Britain, Mauritania, the lower Danube region, and in Dacia.²⁸⁰ However during these wars, he refrained from awarding military decorations. Even his close friends Pompius Falco and Platorius Nepos were not awarded. Moreover, he did not grant himself awards and did not allow his soldiers to crown him again as Imperator. This situation changed after the Bar Kokhba revolt. Hadrian's own titles include *Imperator iterum*; and he awarded decorations to his officers, among whom, two were decorated with the highest possible decorations, the *Ornamenta Triumphalia*. All of this shows the massiveness of the Second Revolt.²⁸¹

Cassius Dio, in his account of the Jewish Revolt, mentioned that in addition to Julius Severus, Hadrian summoned to Judaea the *best of his generals*. Who are these *best generals*? Through a detailed examination of the military careers, the administrative functions, the role in the Bar Kokhba revolt, and the military decorations awarded to them, Eck came up with names of possible *best generals* who joined Julius Severus in Judaea during the last decisive stages of the revolt in order to bring the revolt to an end. Eck rejected the names of Tineius Rufus, who probably ended his military role as soon as Julius Severus arrived in Judaea, and of the commanders of the *x Fretensis* and the *vi Ferrata*, who were under the authority of Julius Severus. He asserted this, despite the fact that the anonymous commander of Legio x Fretensis during the revolt was decorated with two crowns, the *muralis* and the *vallis*, and was also awarded with the *hasta pura*.²⁸² Instead, Eck found the governor of Provincia Syria, C. Certus Publicius Marcellus, and the governor of Provincia Arabia, T. Haterius Nepos, to be among the *best generals*. What made these two worthy of the epithet? Was their participation in the revolt so crucial that we can assess the revolt differently? What evidence led Eck to pick these two generals from the neighboring provinces as the *best generals*?²⁸³

honors and statues, see Arthur Ernest Gordon, *Quintus Veranius Consul AD 49. A Study Upon his Recently Identified Sepulchral Inscription* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1952), 305–330: Appendix II. On Julius Severus, 324.

280 See Eck, 82, who refers to Birley, *Hadrian*, 75, 79–80, 90, 101.

281 Eck, 85.

282 *CIL*, XI 6339; Dąbrowa E. *Legio x Fretensis*, 42–43; See also Maxfield, *Decorations*, 147–148.

283 See Wener Eck, Andreas Pangerl, “Die Konstitution für die classis Misenensis aus dem Jahr 160 und der Krieg gegen Bar Kochba unter Hadrian,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 155 (2006): 248, note 20, They claimed that my comments on the two generals in my article “The Geographical Scope of the Bar Kokhba Revolt,” 107, are worthless and

C. Quinctius Certus Publicius Marcellus:²⁸⁴

Publicius Marcellus was the governor of Syria since at least the second half of 131 CE.²⁸⁵ The length of his governorship is difficult to determine. However, on the basis of an inscription from Palmyra, it is argued that he ended his appointment in Syria in the middle of 135.²⁸⁶ For the years 131 to 135, certain evidence can be associated with the Bar Kokhba revolt, but this evidence has not been employed in the past to make claims about the revolt.²⁸⁷

- A. Two inscriptions from Ancyra in Galatia, known already from the nineteenth century,²⁸⁸ testify to the fact that C. Julius Severus, the senatorial legate of Legio IV Scythica, stationed in Syria, replaced Publicius Marcellus as the governor of the province in 132, while the latter left to join the Roman army in Judaea to crush the Jewish revolt.
- B. An inscription published in 1934 from Aquileia in northern Italy lists Publicius Marcellus' positions as consul, augur, and governor of the provinces of Syria and of Germania Superior. He was also awarded the highest military decoration, the *Ornamenta Triumphalia*.²⁸⁹

According to Eck, Publicius Marcellus personally dedicated the monument.²⁹⁰ The dates just listed present some timing problems. In light of the length of his term as governor of Syria, how long was Publicius Marcellus in Judaea? If he stayed in Judaea just for a short time, was the replacement of C. Julius Severus

do not deserve a response. Nevertheless, I will repeat and enlarge my arguments about the role of these generals in the suppression of the revolt.

284 On the career of Publicius Marcellus, See *PIR*², H. 30; see also, Dąbrowa, *Governors*, 92–94.

285 See Dąbrowa, *Governors*, notes 945 and 946 and Eck, "Jahres- und Provinzialfasten der Senatorischen Statthalter von 69/70 bis 138/139," *Chiron* 13(1983): 169, 171, note 141.

286 Dąbrowa, *Governors*, note 947.

287 Eck, 83, notes 54–55. He cites Schürer, 547–549, and Smallwood, 457, and argues that their editors and revisers related the inscriptions to the Second Revolt, but interpreted them wrongly. I would like to add Stern, *Authors*, II, 398, who discussed these sources.

288 *IGR* III 174, 175; see also Emin Bosch, *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Ankara im Altertum* (Ankara: Tarin Kurumu Basimevi, 1967), nos. 156–7.

289 Giovanni Brusin, *Gli scavi di Aquileia. un quadriennio di attività dell'Associazione nazionale per Aquileia* (1929–1932) (Udine: La Panarie 1934), 76 = *Année épigraphique* 1934, 231 (Aquileia); See also Gordon (above, note 279), 324; Geza Alföldy, *Römische Statuen in Venetia et Histria, Epigraphische Quellen* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1984), p. 99. Werner Eck, *Die Statthalter der germanischen Provinzen vom 1.–3. Jahrhundert* (Köln: Rheinland-Verlag; Bonn: R. Habelt, 1985), no. 26; Johannes B. Brusin, *Inscriptiones Aquileiae* (Udine: Arti grafiche friulane, 1991), I, 236, no. 499.

290 Eck, "Epigraphic Transmission," 166–167 (= Eck, *Judaea-Syria Palästina*, 224–225).



FIGURE 3.6 *The inscription of Publicius Marcellus from Aquileia.*
FROM ROMAN AQUILEIA—MAIN MONUMENTS.

just a temporary one? But if he served in Judaea during the whole revolt, then who was the Governor of Syria? According to Cassius Dio, C. Julius Severus left Syria and was already proconsul of Provincia Achaiae in 133/134. A year later, he was the governor of Pontus-Bithynia.²⁹¹

The matter becomes even more complicated if we take into consideration Eck's suggestion that the revolt lasted as long as to 136.²⁹² The last attestation of Publicius Marcellus in connection with Syria was in 135, as previously mentioned. His successor as governor of Syria was Sextus Julius Severus, which means that there is a gap of almost one year (135–136) in the governorship of Syria.

Eck linked the inscriptions from Ancyra with the military decoration. Publicius Marcellus participated in the last phases of the Second Revolt and fought independently of Julius Severus. His military success obtained for him the decoration and, therefore, Eck counted him among the *best generals*.

In the inscriptions of Publicius Marcellus, it is mentioned that "he left Syria because of the Jewish *kinesis*", i.e., he left Syria to fight the Jews across the border. However, in accordance with the description of Cassius Dio, Eck argued that he may have fought Jewish rebels "not only in Judaea, but also in his own province or in Arabia,"²⁹³ and that "the formulation in the inscription 'he left Syria because of the Jewish *kinesis*' does not mean that Publicius Marcellus entered the province of Judaea; he could have taken part in the fighting in Arabia."²⁹⁴ If this assumption is partially accepted, then the question is why was Publicius Marcellus replaced as governor in Syria? As for the Jews of Syria, there is no evidence of any rebellious acts in Syria during the years 132–136. In the book *The Jews of Syria in Light of the Greek Inscriptions*, Lea Roth-Gerson argued "The Jews of Syria did not revolt at the days of Trajan (in the years 115–117 CE), and therefore the disaster followed the events in which thousands of Jews were killed, skipped over them. Syria became a shelter and a place of rehabilitation for the Jewish refugees from Mesopotamia and Cyprus. The same happened to Judaeans Jews, after the Bar Kokhba revolt, who found refuge in Syria."²⁹⁵

291 See Cassius Dio, 59:14, 4. Halfmann, above, note 249, 151, no. 62; See also Eck, *Chiron* 13 (1983): 226.

292 Eck, 87–88.

293 Eck, 83–84.

294 Eck, note 59.

295 Lea Roth-Gerson, *The Jews of Syria in Light of the Greek Inscriptions* (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center, 2001), 36 [in Hebrew].

There is no evidence for the participation of the Jews of Syria in the revolt in 132–136 CE. Therefore, in light of Eck's assumptions, we have to connect the decorations awarded to Publicius Marcellus to his activity in Judaea itself.

I add another problem that Eck ignored in his research: The existing evidence is ambiguous about the question of when Publicius Marcellus left Syria and joined the Roman army in Judaea. If he joined the army in Judaea during the first phase of the revolt, then he was part of the failure that Tineius Rufus suffered as the military commander of the Roman army in Judaea. Therefore, Eck's statement about Publicius Marcellus' awards, as a token of his distinction in the Second Revolt is acceptable only if we date his joining the army to the second phase at the time that Julius Severus commanded the Roman army in Judaea. Yet doing so causes a different problem related to the military command of the Roman army in the province: How did Julius Severus and Publicius Marcellus, two senior military commanders, act at the same time on the same battlefield?

T. Haterius Nepos

Haterius Nepos was the governor of the province of Arabia and the commander of the only legion stationed in Arabia, the Legio III Cyrenaica, at the time of the Second Revolt in neighboring Judaea. Was he involved in crushing this revolt? He is mentioned in the Babatha archive, where two dates are recorded for his governorship: November, 17, 130, and July, 9, 131.²⁹⁶ Nevertheless, the length of his stay in Arabia is unclear and open to speculation. The key to understanding the length of his stay there is the fact that in the spring of 134 he is listed as *consul in absentia*,²⁹⁷ which means that at this date, he was still in Arabia. Eck rightly argued that he probably stayed even longer, probably because he did not fail as governor of Arabia and above all, because the whole region was in turmoil.²⁹⁸

296 Lewis, *Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period*, nos. 23, 25, 26. On 104, Lewis writes: "Haterius Nepos held the office of prefect (i.e., governor) of Egypt in AD 120–124. The governor of Arabia mentioned in 23, 25, and 26 was presumably the same man or (more likely?) his son." Hans Jakob Polotsky, *Israel Exploration Journal* 12 (1962): 259; idem, *JVEG* 17 (1963): 240.

297 See Ronald Syme, "Consulates in Absence," *Journal of Roman Studies* 48 (1958): 1–9, reprinted in his *Roman Papers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1979), I, 378–92.

298 See Pierre-Louis Gatier, "Gouverneurs et procurateurs à Gêrasa," *Syria* 73 (1996): 48–49. According to an inscription from Gêrasa, Haterius Nepos stayed in Arabia after 134 CE. See also *SEG* 46(1996), no. 2058; Eck, 84, 89, addendum. However, Eck in "Jahres—und Provinzialfasten der senatorischen Statthalter von 69/70 bis 138/39, II," *Chiron* 13(1983), dated his years in Arabia to 129/130–132/133.

What other information do we have about the career of Haterius Nepos? A fragmentary inscription from his hometown, Fulginiae,²⁹⁹ informs us of some of his positions. He held two priesthoods, *frater Arvalis* and *pontifex*, and served as consular governor of Pannonia Superior in 138 CE.³⁰⁰ The last word in the undated fragmentary inscription is *Triumphalib* which was completed as “*Triumphalib [us ornamentis honorarto]*” or “decorated with the *Ornamenta Triumphalia*.”

Because the inscription is undated, scholars related the awarding of the decorations to Haterius Nepos when he was governor of the province of Pannonia Superior in 138.³⁰¹ Andreas Mócsy, for example, dated the war against the Suebi to this period and argued that Haterius Nepos played a central part in the war. This is the background for awarding him the *Ornamenta Triumphalia*.³⁰² However, Eck rejected this dating by arguing, first, that in 138, no wars are recorded at the Danubian border and second, that since Antoninus Pius accepted the title *imperator II* only after his victories in Britain in 142 CE and the award of the *triumphalia* was necessarily correlated with this acclamation, one cannot connect events in Pannonia in 138 to this award. Therefore, the decorations awarded to Haterius Nepos should be linked to his military activities in the Second Revolt.³⁰³

It should be noted that only a governor with a consular rank could be awarded this highest award. This raises a problem in regard to Haterius Nepos, who could not have been eligible for this award during his service in Arabia, since the province then had only a praetorian status. Eck overcame this difficulty by arguing that at the end of the Second Revolt, Haterius already had consular status, thus explaining how he rated his decoration despite his lower-ranked service in Arabia.³⁰⁴

299 CIL XI 5212 = ILS 1058. See Eck, 84, note 74: “The fragment probably belonged to the base of an equestrian statue. This would be an appropriate acknowledgement by his fellow-citizens of a senator’s achievements in the Jewish war.”

300 PIR², H 30. Devijver (above, note 264).

301 See Árpád Dobó, *Die Verwaltung der römischen Provinz Pannonien von Augustus bis Diocletianus*, Die Provinziale Verwaltung (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert 1968), p. 107; Jenő Fitz, *Die Verwaltung Pannoniens in der Römerzeit* (Budapest: Encyclopedia, 1993), II, 478,

302 Andreas Mócsy, *Pannonia and Upper Moesia: A History of the Middle Danube Provinces of the Roman Empire*, Sheppard Frere, trans. and ed. (London and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), 102–103; See also Gordon (above, note 279), 324; Maxfield, *Decorations*, 108.

303 Eck, 84–85.

304 Eck, 85–86 and note 82.

From the archives in the Judean desert relating to the Jews living in Arabia during this period, Eck learned about their attitude and possible reaction to the Second Revolt. He suggested the following possibilities: (1) that those who found shelter in the caves of Naḥal Ḥever were harmless refugees who were afraid of revenge from the local population in Arabia. They left their localities, waiting for better days when they could return home; (2) that the Jews of Arabia identified with the religious ideology and political ideals of the rebels in Judaea and joined them in the fighting in Judaea.

Cotton also offered some explanations of why the Jews of Arabia may have joined the rebels in Judaea. She suggested that they may have been influenced by the messianic atmosphere of the revolt. Or, perhaps they interpreted their move to Judaea as a return to the places where they had lived until the Great Revolt of 66–70 CE, to regions that were freed from Roman occupation in the first phase of the Second Revolt.³⁰⁵ However, the suggestions of Eck and Cotton do not explain anything about the response of the Jews of Arabia to the Second Revolt in the province of Arabia itself. According to the Babatha archive, the Babatha family had already departed from their village Maoza in the district of Zoora as early as August 19, 132.³⁰⁶ That is to say that they left Arabia at the very beginning of the revolt. Furthermore, from the aforementioned evidence, nothing can be deduced about the territorial extent of the Second Revolt.

With respect to the Jews of Arabia, Eck argued additionally that some of them revolted separately in the province itself. This assumption, according to him, is rooted in the statement of Dio Cassius: “and the Jews everywhere were showing signs of disturbance, were gathering together, and giving evidence of great hostility to the Romans, partly by secret and partly by overt acts.”³⁰⁷ However, this poses a problem, particularly since the archives from the Judean Desert create the impression that the relations between the Jews and non-Jews of Arabia were friendly, as were their contacts with the Roman administration of the province. Therefore, it is impossible to learn about the Second Revolt in Judaea by looking at the circumstances in the province of Arabia.³⁰⁸

305 Hannah M. Cotton, “Ein Gedi Between the Two Revolts,” *Scripta Classica Israelica* 20 (2001): 154.

306 Lewis, *Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period*, 29, 116–117, no. 27.

307 Eck, 86. See also Cotton, above, note 305.

308 See Lewis, *Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period*, 26. See also Roger S. Bagnall's review of Hannah M. Cotton, Ada Yardeni, *Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek Documentary Texts from Nahal Hever and Other Sites*, with an appendix containing alleged Qumran texts

On this issue, I add mention of Bowersock's assumption that links Haterius Nepos to the massacre of Jews in Arabia. He explains the *damnatio memoriae*, the erasure of Haterius Nepos' name from an inscription in Gerash, as connected to events in the province related to the Second Revolt. According to him, this event probably caused the flight of the Babatha family from Arabia to the fighting zone in Judaea. If the attack on the Jews in Arabia was a direct response to their local uprising, then the owners of the documents from Naḥal Ḥever were rebellious Jews from Arabia who found shelter in Naḥal Ḥever after their revolt was put down. If we adopt this explanation, we can add that the Jewish population living in Arabia took advantage of the events in Judaea and also revolted. The harsh response of the governor forced them to escape from Arabia to find shelter among the rebels.³⁰⁹

In the Safaitic inscription mentioned previously that was found in Wadi el-Hasad in the northeastern border area of Jordan, it is mentioned that a *Hlst* son of *M'n* of the tribe of *Sa'ad*, rebelled for three years against *Nfs*, who is a tyrant.³¹⁰ The publishers of the inscription identified *Nfs* with Haterius Nepos, the governor of Arabia. According to them, since those three years occurred during the Bar Kokhba revolt, the inscription may reflect the disquiet and rebellious actions against the Roman governor occurring against the background of the Bar-Kochba revolt. Adopting the identification of *Nfs* with Haterius Nepos and the interpretation of the inscription allow for the addition of another military arena that kept the Romans simultaneously busy during the Second Revolt. However, the connection of the two events is improbable.

From the evidence cited above, the most we can learn about the events in Arabia during Haterius Nepos' governorship is of a possible disquiet throughout the province at the same time as the Second Revolt—and also perhaps about the military support of units belonging to Legio III Cyrenaica for the army that suppressed the revolt. Even in the case of Haterius Nepos, the question that comes up is when did he fight, if at all, together with the Roman commanders in Judaea? If he participated in the first phase of subduing the revolt, alongside Tineius Rufus, then the huge disaster was attached to his name. If so, it would be unreasonable to assume that this was the background for the awarding of the *Ornamenta Triumphalia* by Hadrian, who probably visited

(The Seiyāl Collection II) *DJD* xxvii. Oxford, 1997. The review was published in the *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 36 (1999): 137–138.

309 Bowersock, *Roman Arabia*, 108; and Eck, 89.

310 See Sabri Abbadi, Fawzi Zayadine, "Nepos the Governor of the Provincia Arabia in a Safaitic Inscription?" *Semitica* 46 (1996): 155–164. See also *Année épigraphique* 1996, nr. 1599.

the battlefield in Judaea. If he was awarded the decoration while he was fighting under the command of Julius Severus, it is hard to estimate his contribution to the suppression of the revolt. All in all, only limited units of *Legio III Cyrenaica* could have joined him to fight outside of Provincia Arabia, while the others stayed behind to keep order and calm in his province. The anonymous commander of *Legio X Fretensis* probably fought with the full strength of his legion and still was awarded much less prestigious decorations!

In light of the aforementioned disagreements and doubts, it is almost impossible to use the reviewed arguments and suggestions as evidence of the magnitude of the Second Revolt, as some have wanted. I do not think that the crisis extended to the whole empire. Or that it was a major threat to it! Julius Severus was brought to Judaea to solve a limited local crisis. And he successfully accomplished his military aims.

The revolt lasted almost over four years, and information on the Roman losses was described by Fronto and Cassius Dio. Their remarks indicate the difficulties the Romans faced in suppressing the rebels, but that issue should be separated from the issue of the number of Roman soldiers who crushed the revolt. During the first phases of the war, Rome's failures stemmed from the fact that they used tactics that were not appropriate to counter the Jewish guerrilla style of warfare. When Julius Severus, who was experienced in mountain warfare, arrived in Judaea, the Romans adapted their tactics to the local conditions. Severus succeeded in crushing the revolt, not because he used large numbers of soldiers, but because he used small units and effective strategies to rebut the Jewish rebels.

Attitude of the Non-Jewish Population in Palestine to the Second Revolt

4.1 The Samaritans

The question of the participation or non-participation of the Samaritans in the Second Revolt is linked to three complicated issues. The first is the composition of the forces that took part in the revolt, which is to say whether the Samaritans fought alongside the Jewish fighters or fought independently. The answer that they fought alongside leads to the next issue, the territorial extent of the revolt. If the Samaritans did indeed participate in the Second Revolt, either independently or with the Jewish rebels, it seems reasonable to suppose that the revolt extended into Samaria as well.

In my discussion of these issues, I will deal with a variety of sources: Jewish sources, Samaritan sources, and archaeological evidence. But the Jewish and Samaritan literary sources raise many difficulties because of the dates of their composition (centuries after the events described in them) and their expository or legendary character. This character sometimes deprives them of their value as reliable historical testimony and allows for the possibility of understanding them in a double sense since they used literary motifs that can be interpreted in different ways. Yet, in spite of these limitations, I will try to discuss the sources and shed light, through them, on the issue of the Samaritan share in the Second Revolt.

Jewish Sources:

1. Midrash Genesis Rabba, 64:8: (See above, 115)

These were the words that the neighbors of Judah addressed to the Persian king in the sixth century BCE so that he would halt the construction of the Second Temple. The midrash is making an anachronistic use of a doubtful tradition from the time of the return to Zion and describes the Samaritans as the main factor for halting the plan for reconstructing the Temple at the beginning of Hadrian's reign. The author of the Book of Ezra described a few attempts to obstruct the rebuilding of the Temple during that period and attributed them to the neighbors of Judah, whom he called the "adversaries of Judah and

Benjamin” or “the people of the land.”¹ The verse mentioned above was taken from the letter written by the men of the province “beyond the river,”² and the Samaritans are not mentioned in it at all as hindering the reconstruction of the Temple. Josephus was the first to associate the name of the Samaritans with the disturbances in the rebuilding of the Temple during the period of the Return to Zion.³ The background for this was the bad relations that developed between Samaritans and Jews during the period of Josephus and the animosity that prevailed among them. The climax of this hostility occurred when the Samaritans scattered human bones in the Temple courtyard during the Passover festival in order to desecrate the Temple⁴ and murdered Galilean pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem.⁵ A later midrash also ascribes acts of malevolence and frustration of the emperor’s plans to the Samaritans, which reflects the hatred that existed between the two communities during the period of its composition.

The sanctity of Mount Gerizim continued to be one of the main principles of the Samaritan faith, but not specifically in connection with a temple.⁶ It seems that over the years, the Samaritans reconciled themselves to the destruction of their temple, and their hostility toward the Temple in Jerusalem lessened and perhaps even disappeared, especially after the destruction of the rival temple in 70 CE.⁷ It is therefore difficult to accept the claim that the Samaritans adopted a hostile attitude toward the attempt to reconstruct the Temple in Jerusalem. In my view, it would be preferable to reject this claim, just as Alon rejected the entire source as an authentic historical testimony to the events that occurred in Judaea when Hadrian began his rule. The source does

1 Ezra 4: 1–4.

2 Ezra, 4: 11–16. For an article on the topic, see Reinhard Pummer, “Samaritanism: A Jewish Sect or an Independent Form of Yahwism,” in *Samaritans: Past and Present: Current Studies*, eds. Menahem Mor, Fredrich Reiterer (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010): 1–24.

3 JA XI, 19–20: “While they were laying the foundations of the temple, and very busily engaged in building it, the surrounding nations, especially the **Cutheans** . . . urged the satraps, and those in charge to hinder the Jews in the rebuilding of the city, and the construction of the temple. And so being corrupted by their bribes, they sold their services to the **Cutheans** by showing neglect and indifference towards the Jews in their building.” See Reinhard Pummer, *The Samaritans in Josephus* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 82–86.

4 JA, 18: 29–30. See Pummer, 222–243.

5 JA, 20: 118–136. See Pummer, 243–262.

6 See James A. Montgomery, *The Samaritans* (New York: Ktav Pub. House, 1968), 234–239.

7 See Shmuel Safrai, *Pilgrimage during the Second Temple Period* (Tel Aviv: Am Hasefer, 1965), 95–100 [in Hebrew]. He lists the evidence of the Samaritan’s dependency on the Jerusalemite Temple.

not reflect the relationship between Jews and Samaritans during the period between the revolts. It was just in this period that the sages adopted a positive stance towards the Samaritans and regarded them as Israelites, as expressed by the words of Rabbi Akiva: "The Cutheans are righteous proselytes." According to Rabban Shimon ben Gamaliel, "for every commandment that the Cutheans observe they are more strict than Israel."⁸ and "the Samaritans are like Jews."⁹ The position of the sages reflects the attitude of the Jewish population toward the Samaritans and the relations between the two communities during this period, which is characterized by a calm coexistence. Only after the Bar Kokhba revolt was hostility renewed between them, and the reasons for this will be discussed below.¹⁰

2. TJ, *Ta'aniot*, 4, 68d

"Hadrian besieged Bethar for three and one half years. R. Eleazar of Modiin, was sitting on sackcloth and ashes—praying every day: "Master of the universe. Do not sit in judgment today! Do not sit in judgment today."

Hadrian decided to leave and go to him. A certain Samaritan said to him, "Do not depart. I see what must be done so that the city may be surrendered to you."

He entered the city from a sewer. He went and found Rabbi Eleazar of Modiin standing and praying. He pretended to whisper something into his ear. The residents saw him and brought him to Bar Koziba: They said to him "We saw this old man speaking with your uncle." He said to him: "What did you say to him, and what did he say to you?" He [the Samaritan] said to him: "If I tell you, the king will kill me. If I do not tell you, you will kill me. Better that the king kill me and not you."

He [the Samaritan] said to him, "He said to me. 'I will surrender my city.' He [Bar Koziba] went to R. Eleazar of Modiin. He said to him, "What did the Samaritan say?" He said to him, "Nothing" He gave him one kick and killed him.

Immediately a heavenly voice went forth and said: "Oh, *the worthless shepherd who abandons the flock! Let a sword descend upon his arm, and*

8 *Tosefta*, Pesahim 1:15 (156). Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 607. Idem, "The Origin of the Samaritans in the Halachic Tradition," in *Jews, Judaism and the Classical World*, 354–373.

9 *Tosefta*, Terumot IV:14 (32).

10 Oppenheimer, "Bar Kokhba Revolt," 70; Zeev Safrai, "The Samaritans," in *Eretz Israel from the Destruction of the Second Temple to the Muslim Conquest*, 256–257.

upon his right eye . . . His arm shall shrivel up; his right eye shall go blind (Zech 11: 17). You killed R. Eleazar of Modiin, the arm and their right eye of all Israel. Therefore let your right hand shrivel up and your right eye go blind.”

Immediately Bethar was captured and Bar Koziba was killed. They went and carried his head to Hadrian. He said to them, “Who killed this one?” The Samaritan said, “I killed him.” He [Hadrian] said to him, “show me his body.” They showed him his body. They found a snake wound around him. He said, “Had God not killed him, who would have been able to kill him?”¹¹

The Jerusalem Talmud and a parallel midrashic version include, among the factors that led to the destruction of Bethar, an event associated with a Cuthean who betrayed the city to Hadrian after having caused trouble between Eleazar of Modiin and Bar Kokhba. The source holds the Samaritans to blame for the destruction of Bethar and the failure of the entire revolt. A few scholars have inferred from this source that the Samaritans not only had no part in the revolt, but collaborated with the Romans who laid siege to Bethar.¹² Others, on the contrary, thought that one could assume from it that the Samaritans did indeed participate in the revolt and were among those besieged in Bethar.¹³

The fortifications in Bethar, especially that section in the wall that was protected by semicircular-shaped bastions that Yeivin thought resembled the fortifications in Samaria, led Yeivin to believe they were built by the Samaritans residing in Bethar. From this, he inferred that the Samaritans were familiar with military matters. The Cuthean who betrayed the city to the Romans was not just a spy, but someone who knew the secret entrances and the mindset of the rebels and was even closely intimate with members of their leadership.¹⁴

11 Trans. by Rubenstein, 57–58. Cf. Jacob Neusner, *The Talmud of the Land of Israel*, vol. VIII: Tractate Ta'anit, (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 116–118:

שלוש שנים ומחצה עשה אדריינוס מקיף על ביתר. והוה ר' אלעזר המודעי יושב על השקועל האפר ומתפלל בכל יום ואמר רבון העולמים אל תשב בדין היום אל תשב בדין היום בעא אדריינוס מיזל ליה. אמר ליה חד כותי לא תיזיל לך דאנא חמי מה מעבד ומשלים לך מדינתא עאל ליה מן ביבא דמדינתא עאל ואשכח רבי אלעזר המודעי קאים מצלי. עבד נפשיה לחיש ליה בגו אודניה חמוניה בני מדינתא ואייתוניה גבי בן כוזבא. אמרון ליה חמינן ההן סבא משתעי לחביבך אמר ליה מה אמרת ליה ומה אמר לך אנא אמר לך מלכא קטל לי ואי לא אנא אמר לך את קטל יתי ולא את אמר . . . ליה אמר ליה אמר לי דאננא משלים מדינתאי . . . יב ליה חד בעוט וקטליה . . . מיד נלכדה ביתר ונהרג בן כוזבא.

See a parallel version in *Midrash Rabba Lamentations* 2.2§4.

12 See, for example, Abramski, 81.

13 Yeivin, 115.

14 Ibid.

However, in view of the previous discussion on the traditions and legends about the destruction of Bethar, I cannot regard this source as reliable historical evidence from which anything can be learned about the participation or non-participation of the Samaritans in the revolt on the side the Jewish rebels.¹⁵ Even if I ignore this assessment and consider some of the arguments of Yeivin that prove, in his opinion, the participation of the Samaritans in the Second Revolt on the side of the Jews, it is clear to me that his assumptions are without historical basis. First, his supposition that some parts of the walls of Bethar were built by the besieged Samaritans because they resembled Samaritan fortifications is a naive one. The semicircular style of building in Samaria was typical of the Hellenistic period and was introduced into Samaria during the time of Alexander the Great who had banished the Samaritans from the city after they rebelled against his governor Andromachus. In the aftermath of this event, Samaria ceased to serve as the urban center of the Samaritans, who had no choice but to go over to Shechem. A military colony was established in Samaria, which after a while turned into a Macedonian-Greek city named Samaria.¹⁶ If so, then why link the fortifications of Bethar, which resemble the type of fortifications in Samaria, with the Samaritans in particular? Second, in a footnote to what he had written, Yeivin said: "Even if the legend is based on the vague mention of an act that occurred, this is what it means." He based his supposition about the presence of Samaritans in Bethar on the hideouts and underground tunnels that played a decisive part in the war, which are mentioned in Jewish and Samaritan sources dealing with the revolt, and which are confirmed by Cassius Dio.¹⁷ There is no doubt that this supposition, which is based on the mention of secret hideouts and underground tunnels, would be confirmed by the discovery of a network of secret hiding places that have been exposed in recent years in the Judean foothills. But the use of such a network is characteristic not only of the Second Revolt but also of Jewish struggles against the Romans throughout the period of Roman rule over the Land of Israel.¹⁸

Abramski regarded this source as a legend and not as a historical testimony. Therefore, any conclusion inferred from it would merely be a literary analogy. He nevertheless claimed that the source contained a kernel of histori-

¹⁵ Abramski, 80–81.

¹⁶ Purvis (above, note 11), 29; See Oren Tal, *The Archaeology of Hellenistic Palestine: Between Tradition and Removal* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute 2006), 20–22. He questions the dating of the round towers in Samaria.

¹⁷ Yeivin, 228, note 36.

¹⁸ On the hideouts, see above, 221–238.

cal truth: "The problem of the Cutheans in itself must certainly have caused people anxiety during the time of the revolt."¹⁹ Some of this claim is reasonably acceptable; the problem of the Cutheans certainly must have troubled the Jewish population. But this was not during the course of the Second Revolt, but rather in the period that followed it when the system of relations between Jews and Samaritans had once again become aggravated. As seen in the first source, here too, with regard to the disputes between Jews and Samaritans, the later generations anachronistically ascribed this hatred to earlier periods and portrayed the Samaritan community as the main cause for the disasters that the Jews had suffered in the past.²⁰

Both sources are of a legendary character and give no indication of Samaritan-Roman cooperation directed against the Jews, and no testimony can be derived from the second source that the Samaritan fighters cooperated with the Jewish rebels.

Samaritan Sources:

1. *Tulida*²¹
2. *The Samaritan Book of Joshua*²²
3. *Kitab of Abu'l Fath*²³
4. *Chronicle Adler*²⁴

The four Samaritan chronicles composed between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries²⁵ also include the history of the Samaritans during the period of the Bar Kokhba revolt. Despite their late date of composition and their com-

19 Abramski, 82.

20 Oppenheimer, "Bar Kokhba Revolt," 70.

21 Moshe Florentin, ed. *The Tulida: A Samaritan Chronicle: Text, Translation, Commentary* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 1999) [in Hebrew]; John Bowman, *Transcript of the Original Text of the Samaritan Chronicle Tolidah* (Leeds: 1954).

22 *Joshua* (Leiden, 1848); Oliver Turnbull Crane, trans. of *The Samaritan Chronicle of Joshua Son of Nun*, translated from the Arabic with notes (New York: John B. Alden, 1890).

23 Paul Stenhouse, *The Kitab al-Tarikh of Abu 'l-Fath*: Trans. into English with notes (Sydney: Mandelbaum Trust, University of Sidney, 1985).

24 Adler, Elkan-Nathan, Seligson, Max, "Un nouvelle chronique samaritaine," *Revue des Études Juives* 45 (1902): 70–98; 223–254.

25 John Bowman, *Samaritan Documents Relating to Their History and Life* (Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1977), 37–213. See also Paul Stenhouse, "Chronicles of the Samaritans," in *Companion to the Samaritan Studies*, eds. Alan D. Crown, Reinhard Pummer, Abraham Tal (Tübingen: Mohr, 1993): 50–53.

pilation nature, some scholars claim that there is ancient material embedded in these chronicles that can shed light on events associated with the Second Revolt.²⁶ A summary of the four chronicles that are concerned with the activities of Hadrian in Provincia Judaea presents the following picture: The Temple in Jerusalem is still standing and pilgrims are going up to the city and offering sacrifices in the Temple, as known from the story of the two Samaritan brothers, Ephraim and Menashe of the city of Yasuf who gave a Jewish pilgrim accommodation for the night. During that night they exchanged the doves that the pilgrim had intended to offer as sacrifice for mice. After their actions were discovered, they were punished and made to serve as slaves in the Temple.²⁷

The story of the two brothers in the chronicles fits with the description of the siege that Hadrian laid against Jerusalem. The city withstood the siege because the besieged brought food and other necessities into the city through underground tunnels that led outside it toward Jericho and Lod. The city was betrayed to Hadrian when the two brothers, Ephraim and Menashe, revealed its secret. Later, after Hadrian had conquered Jerusalem, he took control over Hebron.

In continuation of this story, it is told that Hadrian planned to destroy Shechem, but his plan was cancelled because they warned him that the inhabitants of that area would rebel against him. Instead of doing so, he built a city on Mount Gerizim and set up a temple at the foot of the mountain.²⁸ After Hadrian's return to Rome, the Samaritans purified with fire all the places the emperor had visited.²⁹ But when the tale-bearing Jews reported the actions of the Samaritans, Hadrian commanded to put all the circumcised Samaritans to death and forbade them to accept converts and to observe the Sabbath and festival days. He sowed destruction in Shechem, and it ceased only when the

26 Yeivin, 178–179.

27 The summary is based on the Hebrew translation of the Samaritan *Book of Joshua*, chapter 47. See Raphael Kirchheim, *Karme Shomeron* (Frankfurt: A. Koyfman, 1851), 85–88. Cf. Friedrich Niessen, *Eine Samaritanische Version des Buches Yehošua und die Šobak Erzählung: Die Samaritanische Chronik Nr. 11, Handschrift 2: JR(G) 1168 = Ryl. Sam. MS 259, Folio 8b–53a* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2000). This is a translated edition.

28 *Chronicle Adler* (above, note 24), 82. The chronicle does not mention Hadrian's intentions to harm the Samaritan population of Shechem. On the contrary, the Emperor was good to the Shechemites and he built a Temple to Sapis on Mount Gerizim.

29 *Ibid.*, 28. "The Chronicle does not consider the purification through fire of the places where Hadrian had visited as a cause for hurting the Samaritans. According to the Chronicle, the reason was the fact that foolish people of the sons of Israel, the Samaritans, gathered together and burnt the temple of Sapis and all its believers. They destroyed the place, they hit all its officials, and burnt them in fire. . . ."

Samaritans made clear to him the meaning of their actions, and he realized that the stories about their actions was just a malicious slander by the Jews.

The prior description, including the history of the Samaritans during the period of Hadrian, their relationship to the emperor, and the relations between Hadrian and the Jews, paints an ambiguous picture: On one hand, is the positive attitude of the emperor towards the Samaritans, who were the main beneficiaries of Hadrian's attack against the Jews when he conquered Jerusalem and Hebron. On the other hand, is a negative description of Hadrian's attitude towards the Samaritans following their uprising or Jewish defamations that led to persecution and harsh decrees imposed by the emperor upon the Samaritans. Examples of such decrees are those forbidding circumcision and ritual immersion to prevent them from accepting converts into the community and the prohibition against observing the Sabbath and festival days.

A few scholars rejected the testimony of the Samaritan chronicles as reliable historical evidence for the events that occurred during Hadrian's reign. Their main arguments were based on the late date of their composition.³⁰ But another argument against the trustworthiness of the chronicles was based on their midrashic character, reflected in subjects that appeared together from both Samaritan and Jewish traditions.³¹ For example, in Jewish tradition, it was the treachery of the Samaritans that led to the betrayal of Bethar, while according to Samaritan tradition, it was an act of the Samaritans that led to the handing over of Jerusalem to the emperor. The motif of betrayal appears again in the Samaritan chronicles but in a different way, in the story of the betrayal of the Jews that had caused the persecution of the Samaritans by Hadrian.

On another matter, the Jewish traditions denounced the Samaritans for worshipping idols on Mount Gerizim: "They found the image of a dove on the top of Mount Gerizim and they used to worship it."³² In the Samaritan

30 See Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 604; Abramski, 80.

31 Ibid., "The parallel component to the Talmudic sources does not confirm its dates or originality."

32 *TB* Hulin, 6a: "R. Nahman b. Isaac explained: Because they found a figure of a dove on the top of Mount Gerizim and they worshipped it."

(= "אמר רב נחמן בר יצחק דמות יונה מצאו להן בראש הר גריזים שהיו עובדין אותה"), *TJ*, Avoda Zara, 4:4: "They have a kind of a dove and they pour wine for it" ("כמין יונה" = "אית להן ומנסכין לה"). On the dove cult, see Jarl E. Fossum, "Samaritan Demiurgical Traditions and the Alleged Dove Cult of the Samaritans," in *Studies in Gnosticism and Hellenistic Religions: Presented to Gilles Quispel on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday*, eds. R. van den Broek, Maarten Jozef Vermaseren (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 143–160; Yaakov Meshorer, "On Three Interesting Cults in Neapolis Samaria," in *Kraay–Mørholm Essays: Numismatic Studies in Memory of Colin M. Kraay and Otto Mørholm*, eds. George. Le Rider,

chronicles, the dove has a central function associated with the destruction of Jerusalem. In addition, these traditions malign the Jews for being idol worshippers. According to them, after Hadrian entered the Holy of Holies, he saw in it a statue that the Jews adored. Another element that recurs in Jewish and Samaritan traditions is the description of the tunnels and hideout networks that were used by the besieged in Jerusalem and Bethar.³³

Büchler, in his study of chapter 47 of the *Samaritan Chronicle of Joshua*,³⁴ opposed most of the claims made above. According to him, in spite of the late date for the composition of the Chronicle, it should be examined to determine whether it is composed entirely of legendary material that has no basis nor historical value or whether some of its descriptions contain some reliable historical echo that obliges us to treat these sources more seriously. In Büchler's opinion, the first part of chapter 47, which describes the siege that Hadrian laid against Jerusalem, refers to the events of the Great Revolt and has no connection with the events of the Second Revolt. Additionally, this part should not be regarded as a description that had been transferred in Samaritan traditions from events that occurred in Bethar at the end of the Second Revolt to the events of the siege against Jerusalem during this period.

The second part of the chapter, which describes the relations between the Samaritans and Hadrian, should also be ascribed, as Büchler believed, to the events of the Great Revolt. Nevertheless, certain details, such as the erection of a temple on Mount Gerizim and the decrees and prohibitions that were imposed upon the Samaritans, can be ascribed to the days of Hadrian. In view

et al. (Louvain-la Neuve: Institut supérieur d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'art, séminaire de numismatique Marcel Hoc 1989): 173–175. From a third-century coin, he concluded that on Mount Gerizim there was a dovecote, or some part of it, and that the Samaritans used the doves for purification sacrifices; idem, "New Discoveries in the Coinage of the Cities of Roman Palestine," in *Biblical Archaeology Today*, 1990, ed. Joseph Aviram (Jerusalem, 1990), 141–143 [in Hebrew]. See also Andreas Lehnardt, "Die Taube auf dem Garizim: zur antisamaritanischen Polemik in der rabbinischen Literatur," in *Die Samaritaner und die Bibel: Historische und literarische Wechselwirkungen zwischen biblischen und samaritanischen Traditionen* (= *The Samaritans and the Bible: Historical and Literary Interactions between Biblical and Samaritan Traditions*, eds. Jörg Frey, Ursula Schattner-Rieser, Konrad Schmid (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012): 285–302.

33 See Yeivin, 228, note 36. According to him, the use of various traditions about the cave, proves that the sources are authentic historical evidence.

34 Adolph Büchler, "The Samaritans Participation at the Bar Kokhba Revolt." The article was first published in the Hungarian journal *Magyar-Szido Szemle* 14 (1897): 36–47, and was translated and republished in Hebrew in the collection edited by Aharon Oppenheimer, *The Bar Kokhba Revolt: Collection of Articles*, 115–121.

of these things, Büchler summarized: "Our definite conclusions are therefore that the Samaritans did not take part in the Bar Kokhba revolt and did not even suffer from Hadrian's persecutions."³⁵

The conclusions of Büchler warrant reexamination. The Samaritan chronicles that describe the days of Hadrian do not connect the events of the period with the Second Revolt. The same applies to the Jewish sources I mentioned above, in which there is no evidence that the Samaritans took part in the revolt on the side of the Jewish fighters. Thus nothing can be said about Jewish-Samaritan cooperation during the course of the Second Revolt, not even in its initial stages when the rebels were enjoying some success.³⁶ The behavior of the Samaritans during the period of the Second Revolt is therefore worth examining from a different viewpoint. There is only one place in his book on the war, in *Jewish War*, III, 307–315 where Josephus mentions the actions of the Samaritans during the period of the Great Revolt, in the years 66–73 CE.³⁷ The event in question occurred in July 67 CE³⁸ in the course of the siege on Jotapata and after the fall of the Galilean city Japhia.³⁹ Josephus relates that the Samaritans gathered on the summit of Mount Gerizim and that they did not move from their places, but in the eyes of Vespasian, their very gathering was interpreted as indicating a warlike intention. He therefore decided to send out a military force to that place in order to prevent any possibility that the Samaritans would fight against the Romans. What was the purpose of the gathering? The Samarian region had already been placed under a stationary Roman force, and Vespasian sent Cerealis, commander of the Fifth Legion, to Mount Gerizim at the head of an expeditionary force of six hundred cavalry and three thousand infantry. Cerealis preferred to lay siege on the mount and not to try to conquer it by assault. The hot summer days and the lack of water caused the death of many Samaritans, and others surrendered to the Romans. Cerealis went up the mountain and offered to have those remaining there give up to ensure their safety. Since they did not respond to him, he attacked them all and according to Josephus, killed 11,600

35 Ibid., 120.

36 Abramski, 83; Yeivin, 244, note 185, 96–97.

37 See Pummer, *Josephus*, 262–268; Ritta Egger, *Josephus Flavius und die Samaritaner* (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1986), 161–168.

38 Josephus dated the clash to the 27th of the month Daesius, which is July 15th, 67. See H. Thackeray, *The Jewish War Books* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), 665, note c.

39 See Mordechai Aviam, "The fortified settlements of Josephus Flavius and their significance against the background of the excavations of Yodefāt and Gamla." In *The Great Revolt in the Galilee*, Curator Ofra Guri-Rimon (Haifa: Hecht Museum, 2008): 29–52.

Samaritans.⁴⁰ Besides the fearful downfall and slaughter in 67 CE, there is no evidence that the Samaritans participated in any of the stages or courses of the Great Revolt, especially not in the final stages that were focused around the Temple and the city of Jerusalem.⁴¹

In 72/73 CE, Vespasian founded the city of Flavia Neapolis on the foundations of the village of Mabatha, and it was established as part of Shechem.⁴² Magen linked its establishment with the “revolt of the Samaritans” and their attempts to restore their city and temple on Mount Gerizim. “Neapolis was not founded by the Flavians for the sake of the Samaritans but in opposition to them!” and in his opinion, “its foundation neutralized the possibility that the Samaritans would have any future control over Mount Gerizim and ensured Roman control over the road to the mountain as a means to prevent another revolt.”⁴³ However, Hamitovsky recently asserted that the main reason for the establishment of the city was its strategic location on a central crossroad.⁴⁴ Add to this the fact that it was not meant to punish the Samaritan population for their conduct during the Great Revolt, and it becomes clear that this was intended as a change in the status and a strengthening of the city of Shechem. An important question related to the founding of this city is the composition of its population. If the reason for its establishment was for the benefit of the city of Shechem, then some of its people would have been Samaritans. Shechem had been the urban center of the Samaritans ever since the fourth

40 Morton Smith, “The Troublemakers,” in *Cambridge History of Judaism*, 111 (1999): 537, note 42. He argued that the number of slain, 11,600, is a manuscript error of the number 1600.

41 For an attempt to bring Samaritans to Masada, see Shemaryahu Talmon, “A Masada Fragment of Samaritan Origin,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 47 (1997): 220–232. Based on a fragment found in Masada (Massada 320–1039) in which “הַר גֵּרִיזִים” (= Mount Gerizim) is written in one word, he argued that this was written by a Samaritan refugee who found shelter in the fortress. He added: “The very presence of these writings sheds light on the heterogeneous composition of the population at Masada: alongside Zealots and fighters from the mainstream of Second Temple Judaism, there were dissenters, such as Samaritans and Yahad members, who also found refuge in the desert fortress. In the face of the imminent attack of the Roman army, the barriers between the various socio-religious groups broke down to a certain extent.”

42 *JW*, 4: 449; Pliny the Elder, *Historia Naturalis*, v, 69. See Pummer, *Josephus*, 45–46. On the date of the foundation of the city, according to its coins, see Arie Kindler, “City Coins of Eretz Israel and the Bar Kokhba War,” *Cathedra* 49 (1988): 49–51 [in Hebrew].

43 Magen, *Flavia Neapolis*, 329–330.

44 Yitzhak Hamitovsky, “Flavia Neapolis (Shechem): The Samaritan Community during the Roman Period,” *Judea and Samaria Research Studies* 16 (2007): 93–109 [in Hebrew].

century BCE, and even after its destruction by John Hyrcanus in 112–111 BCE, the Samaritans apparently continued to live there.

The statement of Magen that after the destruction of the temple on Mount Gerizim, the Samaritans disappeared from the stage of history for a long time, and that only at the end of the first century BCE, do we hear of them again, raises the questions of where they went and what was the cause for their empowerment in the first century CE.⁴⁵ We have no evidence that the Samaritans were expelled from Shechem in order to build Flavia Neapolis “cleansed” of Samaritans. In view of this, the new city must have contained a mixture of Samaritans and pagans and was undoubtedly planned as a Hellenistic city in which the Samaritan population continued to constitute a major factor, even though the management of the city was by foreigners.⁴⁶ The Romans chose not to make any radical changes in the existing situation with both Samaritan and pagan inhabitants living alongside each other. But they did change the status of the city into a Hellenistic *polis* with all the institutions that belonged to this kind of city. The city became the urban center of the Samaritans, and the change did not create any upheavals among the Samaritan population, even though the city had acquired a Greek character.⁴⁷ The Hellenistic character of the city is reflected in a dedicatory inscription, dated 123/124 CE in honor of Pompeius Falco who served as the governor of Judaea in the year 105/6 CE, which was discovered in Ephesus in Asia Minor. The inscription was set up by two people, Flavius Iuncus and Ulpius Proculus, representing the *demos* and *boule* of the city Flavius Neapolis in Samaria, to honor Falco whom they called their *savior and benefactor* (σωτήρ καὶ ἐνεργετή) in the inscription.⁴⁸ The change did no harm to the Samaritan religion and traditions. On the contrary, it was the *polis* that adopted the local traditions,⁴⁹ which is evident in the local coins minted from the time of Domitian in 82/83 CE that did not bear any pagan

45 Magen, *Flavia Neapolis*, 327.

46 Zeev Safrai, “Shechem in the Mishnaic and Talmudic Periods, 63 BCE–637 CE,” in *Samaria Studies*, eds. Shimeon Dar, Zeev Safrai (Tel Aviv: ha-Īibuts ha-me’uḥad, 1976): 85–87 [in Hebrew]; idem, “The History of the Settlements on Mount Samaria in the Roman-Byzantine Periods,” *ibid.*, 132 [in Hebrew].

47 See Stern, “Roman Government,” 17.

48 On the inscription, see Dieter Knibbe, *Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts* 12 (1968–71): 29–32; Helmut Engleman, Dieter Knibbe, Reinhold Merkelbach eds., *Die Inschriften von Ephesus*, 111 (Bonn: Habelt, 1980), 112, no. 713. See also the notes in *AE* 1972, no. 577, and Anthony R. Birley, *The Roman Government of Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 115.

49 See Elias Bickerman, *The God of the Maccabees: Studies on the Meaning and Origin of the Maccabean Revolt*, trans. Horst R. Moehring (Leiden: Brill, 1979), 61–62.

symbols.⁵⁰ The symbols on the coins resembled those that had been used in the past on Jewish coins, such as cornucopia, laurel wreaths, vine branch, palm tree, wheat stalks, and grape clusters. The absence of pagan symbols indicates the consideration for the feelings of the Samaritan inhabitants of the city.⁵¹

Magen attempted to challenge the reliance on the coins of the city as evidence. In his opinion, they provided no information about the composition of the city population because they were municipal coins, and hence no special significance should be given to the symbols on them. He claimed that the symbols on these coins are not specifically Jewish ones but merely reflect the general style of coins widespread in Palestine of that period. He further stated that it would be difficult to ascribe any special consideration by the Flavian emperors towards Jews or Samaritans after the Great Revolt in which, in his opinion, the Samaritans also took part. Yet it is worth noting that during his discussion of the “gods and their cult on Neapolis coins,” Magen admits that “the assumption of the scholars is that the Romans refrained from inscribing pagan elements on their coins with the exception of the image of the emperor. . . it is difficult to deny this assumption.”⁵² And he remarked cynically that “the date palm appears on the coins of ‘Judaea Capta’ that were minted during the reign of Domitian to commemorate the victory of the Romans over the Jews and the destruction of the Temple, and one should not suspect that he tried to placate the Jews or give consideration to their feelings by these coins.”⁵³ What kind of a comparison is this? Does the date palm on the coins of Judaea Capta, which were meant to glorify the suppression of the Jewish rebels by the Romans, appear as the only symbol? Do not coins also exist with the palm tree that symbolizes Judaea and the image of an armed Roman soldier standing next to a seated woman who represents the defeated people?⁵⁴ This comparison only strengthens what was said above about consideration in the coin mintage!

A radical change in the attitude of the Roman regime towards the Samaritans began during the reign of Hadrian. This led to a change in the status of the

50 See Hill, 45–47 plates xxv–xxvi. The symbols on the coins are agricultural. However, Domitian’s bust on the coins is a compromise with foreign rule. See Yaakov Meshorer, *The Coins of Eretz Israel and the Decapolis in the Roman Period* (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 1984), 48 [in Hebrew]. For parallel coins from Tiberias and Sepphoris dated to Trajan’s period, see *ibid.*, 34, no. 77; 36, nos. 87–90. See also Alla Kushnir-Stein, “Reflection of Religious Sensitivities on Palestinian City Coinage,” *Israel Numismatic Research* 3 (2008): 125–136.

51 Stern, “Roman Government,” 17; Zeev Safrai, “Samaritans,” 256–257.

52 Magen, *Flavia Neapolis*, 250.

53 Magen, *Flavia Neapolis*, 329–330.

54 See Yaakov Meshorer, *A Treasury of Jewish Coins*, 185–191, 265–266, plate 79.

Samaritan population in its urban center and its religious center on Mount Gerizim. Two of the details mentioned in the Samaritan Chronicles, the erection of a temple on Mount Gerizim by Hadrian and the prohibition against circumcision which the emperor imposed on the Samaritans, receive confirmation from other sources that cannot be accused of bias.

1. Additional literary and archaeological evidence can be found for the building of a temple on Mount Gerizim:

Damascius, *Vita Isidori*, 141:

He says that the successor of Proclus, Marinus, came from Neapolis in Palestine, a city situated near the mountain called Argarizon. Then the impious writer uttered the blasphemy that on this mountain there is a most holy sanctuary of Zeus the Highest, to whom Abraham the father of the old Hebrews consecrated himself.⁵⁵

Damascius, who lived during the first half of the sixth century CE, wrote in his book *Vita Isidori* that the Neapolitan philosopher Marinus was a Samaritan from Neapolis in Palestine, which lies near Mount Gerizim on which stands a most holy temple to Zeus the Highest (Διὸς ὑψίστος).⁵⁶ The Roman temple is inscribed on the coins of Neapolis dated to the year 160 CE, at the end of the reign of Antoninus Pius. Inscribed on the coins is the image of Mount Gerizim with its two peaks; on the lower one is the Roman temple, and on the higher one is an altar that symbolizes in Samaritan tradition the place for the binding of Isaac.⁵⁷ In the archaeological excavations conducted on Mount Gerizim and Tel er-Ras, the excavators exposed a temple that was identified as the Temple

55 Stern, *Authors*, II, 673–675, no. 548.

56 Menahem Stern, “Jewish and Samaritan Philosophers and Scientists in Damascius, Life of Isidorus,” *Studies in the History of the Jewish People and the Land of Israel* 3 (1975): 44–93. See also Hans G. Kippenberg, *Garizim und Synagoge* (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1971): 99–100; Montgomery (above, note 6), 91, note 35, who refers to another piece of evidence in Cassius Dio 15.12. However there is no additional information in this citation. See also Kippenberg, 98, and note 38; Pummer, *Christian Authors*, 423–424, 429.

57 On the coins, see Hill, 46, plates v–vii. See also Bickerman (above, note 49), 61–62. Michael Avi Yonah, “The Samaritans during the Roman and Byzantine Periods,” in *The Land of Samaria*, ed. Joseph Aviram (Jerusalem: 1973): 35 [in Hebrew]. According to him, impressed on the coin is one peak of the mountain on which the Hellenistic temple was rebuilt with the help of Roman architecture, and on the other peak, the Samaritan temple, where they sacrificed. Magen, *Flavia Neapolis*, 223–226.

of Zeus built by Hadrian. Among the finds associated with the temple, two inscriptions were found: ΔΙΙ ΟΛΥΜ(ΠΙΩ).⁵⁸

In summing up the archaeological excavations of the Roman temple on the northern extension of Mount Gerizim at Tel er-Ras, Magen claimed that the temple was erected as part of the urban plan of Roman Neapolis and the sanctity of the mountain, and that the appearance of the Temple of Zeus for the first time on the coins of the Antoninus Pius period is related to the dedication of the temple during his reign.⁵⁹ Bull, who excavated on Tel er-Ras, distinguished two building stages. In the first stage, the Roman temple (Building A) was built during the reign of Hadrian, which was followed by further building stages from the third to the sixth century CE. In opposition to Bull's finds and dating, Magen claimed that the Roman temple was built in two stages. The first was a small compound to which a stairway was added in the second century CE. The second stage, which Bull had dated to 130 CE, was dated by Magen to the third century CE.⁶⁰ According to Magen, the facts that Cassius Dio did not link Hadrian and the Roman temple on Mount Gerizim, that the Samaritan sources are not historically reliable, that the Roman temple does not appear on Neapolis coins of the Hadrian period but only on those of Antoninus Pius in 160 CE, and that no Hadrian coins were found at the site (as compared with the wealth of coins from the period of Antoninus Pius and his wife, Faustina, in the excavations conducted by Bull at the site of the Roman temple), all testify that the temple was not erected during the Hadrian period but rather during that of Antoninus Pius and that the first coin symbolizes the dedication of the temple in 160 CE.

58 On the excavations on Mount Gerizim, see Robert Bull, "The Excavations of Tell er Ras on Mt. Gerizim," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 150 (1968): 4–41. For the inscriptions, 30 plate g; idem, "Er Ras Tell (Mount Gerizim)", in *New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, eds. Ephraim Stern, Ayeleth Lewinson-Gilboa (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, Carta (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993): Vol. IV, 1015–1022; idem, "Ras Tel er," in *Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East*, ed. Eric M. Meyers (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997): 407–409. Yizhak Magen, Haggai Misgav, Levana Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Excavations*, vol. 1. *The Aramaic, Hebrew and Samaritan Inscriptions*, vol. 2. *A Temple City* (Jerusalem: Staff Officer of Archaeology, Civil Administration for Judea and Samaria; Israel Antiquities Authority, 2004–2008); Arthur Segal, *Temples and Sanctuaries in the Roman East. Religious Architecture in Syria, Iudaea/Palaestina and Provincia Arabia* (Oxford; Oakville: Oxbow Books, 2013), 255–258, Temple 69.

59 Magen, *Flavia Neapolis*, 226.

60 *Ibid.*, 234.

This claim by Magen is problematic because the coins of Flavia Neapolis do not begin with the foundation of the city by Vespasian; they begin in the reign of Domitian. Therefore, perhaps a similar situation occurred in this case, in which the coins with the image of the Roman temple were minted not by its founder, Hadrian, but by his heir Antoninus Pius. It is interesting that, on this occasion Magen addressed only the consideration given by the Romans and Antoninus Pius to the feelings of the Samaritans, since they built the Roman temple not on the place held sacred by the Samaritans but on the northern slope of the mountain.⁶¹ Note that a possible difficulty arises from Magen's words: If Antoninus Pius was so sensitive towards the Samaritans, why did he not release them from the prohibition against circumcision, as he had done for the Jews?

My intention is to link the evidence for the erection of the temple on Mount Gerizim with the visit by Hadrian to the region in 129 CE, when he was planning the transformation of Jerusalem into a Roman colony called *Aelia Capitolina*. Some of the Samaritan subjects of Hadrian were living in the urban center of Flavia Neapolis, which was a city planned like all other Hellenistic cities and was managed as a *polis* in every respect. Yet, the Samaritans were generally separated from Hadrian's other subjects in their religious cult on Mount Gerizim. In my view, during Hadrian's visit to Palestine, when he had made his decision to set up Aelia Capitolina and to build a temple to Jupiter, he also decided to build a pagan temple on Mount Gerizim, which was sacred to the Samaritans.⁶²

2. On the prohibition of circumcision that was imposed on the Samaritans, there are a number of indirect testimonies:

Modestinus on a Rescript of Antoninus Pius

In a citation from a work by the jurist Modestinus on the imperial decree (*rescriptum*) of Emperor Antoninus Pius (138–161 CE), it is said “Jews are permitted to circumcise only their sons on the authority of a rescript of the Divine Pius; if anyone shall commit it on one who is not of the same religion, he shall suffer the punishment of a castrator.”⁶³

61 Ibid., 235–237.

62 Barbara Burrell, *NEOKOROI: Greek Cities and Roman Emperors* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 260–265; chapter 36: Neapolis in Samaria, Syria Palaestina.

63 *Digesta*, XLVIII, 8:11; Amnon Linder, *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation*, (Detroit/Jerusalem: Wayne State University Press, Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1987), 99–102, text 1.

Antoninus Pius thus permitted the Jews to practice circumcision, but this permission was granted only to the Jews and on condition that they would only circumcise their own children. If the reference is to a permit that was given after a general prohibition against circumcision, then it is clear that the prohibition remained valid for other groups such as the Samaritans.⁶⁴ With regard to the Samaritans, the circumcision decree was not annulled for them by Antoninus Pius, and there is also no evidence in the sources for any attempt by them to rise up against the prohibition or against its non-annulment. The Samaritan sources completely ignore the fact that circumcision was permitted only for the Jews, and they even note that the relations of the Samaritans with the Roman regime during the period of Antoninus Pius were good: "During the priesthood [of Phineas] there was King Antonus, and this king loved the Samaria community of the Children of Israel with a great love because he was a simple man and read the Torah of Moses. . . ."⁶⁵ But it is doubtful whether this saying is of any independent value since it may be that the Samaritans copied Jewish sources on the subject of relations between them and Antoninus Pius.⁶⁶

Recently, Jonathan Bourgel claimed that the Samaritans were also included in the imperial decree of Antoninus Pius to give the Jews permission to practice circumcision. Among other testimonies that he discussed was the book *The First Apology*, which was written between 153 and 155 CE by the church father Justin Martyr. In his view, although well aware of the differences between Jews and Samaritans, Justin regarded the Samaritans as being of the *tribe of Israel and the House of Jacob* and distinguished between them and the other nations by including them as part of the whole House of Israel. From a verse quoted by Justin Martyr from Jeremiah 9:25, "For all these nations are uncircumcised, but all the House of Israel are uncircumcised of Heart," Bourgel inferred that the Jews and Samaritans both continued to practice circumcision. He brought further evidence for the fact that the Samaritans were included in the rescript from Talmudic literature, from the *baraita*, in which Rabbi Yose and Rabbi Judah, who were active in the period following the Bar Kokhba revolt, discussed whether an Israelite was permitted to circumcise a Cuthean, or a Cuthean to circumcise an Israelite. He again inferred from this discussion that the Samaritans practiced circumcision despite the rescript

64 Schäfer, "Causes of the Bar Kokhba Revolt," 86–88. He rejects the claim for a general ban on circumcision, therefore Hadrian's ban and Pius' release were only limited to the Jews. See also idem, "Circumcision and the Bar Kokhba Revolt," 119–132.

65 Adler, (above, note 24), 84.

66 See Stenhause (above, note 25), 233, note 87.

of Antoninus Pius.⁶⁷ However, according to the testimony of the church father Origen, the Samaritans were persecuted around the year 250 CE because they circumcised their sons.

Origen, *Contra Celsum*, 2:13

But someone may say that the Samaritans are also persecuted for their religion. Our answer to him would be as follows. They are put to death on account of circumcision as Sicarii, on the grounds that they are mutilating themselves contrary to the established laws and are doing what is allowed to Jews alone... The mere evidence of the circumcision is enough to condemn to death a man who has been circumcised.⁶⁸

This evidence forced Bourgel to discuss the following question: When were the Samaritans denied the right to circumcise? In his detailed reply, he dates the prohibition against circumcision by Samaritans to the year 199 CE, during the visit of Emperor Septimius Severus (193–211) to Palestine. Since this period of time is beyond the scope of this book, I will not expand upon the motives of Severus to prohibit circumcision by Samaritans. Returning to the days of Hadrian, Bourgel's claim that circumcision was permitted to the Samaritans as it was for the Jews in the rescript of Antoninus Pius, suggests that it was prohibited by his predecessor Hadrian. It should be remembered that since the 70s of the first century CE, some of the Samaritan population were living in a *polis*, which certainly must have influenced their way of thinking and their lifestyle. Therefore, it is not at all surprising that some of them accepted the actions of Hadrian without opposition. However, from the above sources, it appears that there were those who did not comply with the emperor's decisions and rebelled against him.⁶⁹

67 Jonathan Bourgel, "Roman Influence on Relations Between Jews and Samaritans," *Cathedra* 144 (2012): 9–10 [in Hebrew].

68 Translation of Henry Chadwick, *Contra Celsum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 79; See Pummer, *Christian Authors*, 45–46, 56, text 12. Origen, *Commentaria in Evangelium secundum Matthæum* 17, 29 [PG 13, cols. 1561] "Strive to death for the Law of Moses and Circumcision." See Pummer, *ibid.*, 46. See also Bourgel, 17–18. Some scholars (on the basis of *Kohelet Rabba*, 2:17, "אם למשמרי שבת את שונא אלו הכותים," "If those who observe the Sabbath are hated by those who are circumcised") argued that the Jews were the only ones who were hurt by Hadrian. See Mantel, "Causes," 235; Safrai (above, note 51), 234.

69 Chronicle Adler (above, note 24), 82: "Then the foolish people from the Israelite community, gathered and burnt the temple (= כנישת) of Safis." See Applebaum "Results," 240. He

Eusebius noted in his *Theophania*: "These two mountains (Gerizim and Jerusalem) were desolate in the days of Titus Vespasian and Hadrian."⁷⁰ It may be that these words preserve some historical reference to the suppression of the Samaritans on Mount Gerizim, a harsh and cruel suppression that is also described in the Samaritan chronicles. Hadrian burnt houses and killed wise men and judges, and many found their death through starvation and were left unburied. The chronicles also note that many fled from their homes, and "they had no place to sleep except in the desert, forests and caves."⁷¹ In my view, this testimony should be linked with the coin find in the cave of Arak e-Nessana in Wadi Daliya, if this cave had indeed been in use during the period of the Bar Kokhba revolt.⁷² In the past, this area served as a place of refuge for the Samaritan aristocracy that had rebelled against Alexander the Great.⁷³ Thus, it may be preferable to assume that those who found refuge during the period under discussion were Samaritan rebels.

We have a number of testimonies of Roman military presence in the Samaria region. Near Shechem, a tomb inscription was found of a soldier, Marcus Ulpius Magnus, who had served in Legio v Macedonica.⁷⁴ In Sebastia, a dedicatory inscription to Jupiter was found that had been set up by soldiers from a company originating in Pannonia Superior.⁷⁵ It is, however, difficult to decide whether these units were stationed in the area before the Second Revolt or had been brought there to suppress the Samaritan uprising.⁷⁶ Therefore, Applebaum claimed that the connection of these testimonies to a Samaritan revolt is ambiguous. If these Roman forces had indeed been stationed in that region before the Bar Kokhba revolt, it seems reasonable to suppose that the Samaritans did not rebel. On the other hand, if these units were brought there during the course of the revolt, it can be attributed to the fact that the Samaritans had rebelled.⁷⁷ In my opinion, the Roman units were stationed in the region of Samaria before the outbreak of the Second Revolt. Flavia Neapolis was one of the central cities in the country. Therefore, it may be supposed that

argued that parts of the rural Samaritan community took part in the revolt, though the Hellenized centers collaborated with the Romans.

70 See Eusebius, *Theophania* 4:23. See Pummer, *Early Christian Authors*, 89–91, no. 32.

71 *Samaritan Book of Joshua*, chapter 47; Büchler (above, note 34), 118.

72 See above, 220.

73 Purvis (above, note 11), 29.

74 See above, 304. See also Magen, *Flavia Neapolis*, 312–313. Applebaum, "Results," 240, 391–392, notes 39 and 55.

75 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 606.

76 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 80, note 206A.

77 Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae* XIV, 8, 11–12. See Stern, *Authors*, II, 604–605, no. 505.

during this period of unrest, certain military units were stationed there to protect it and the region as a whole.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, the presence of the military units did not prevent the rural population of the Samaritan community to rise up against the actions of Hadrian, who had injured the very foundation of the Samaritan faith, the sanctity of Mount Gerizim, and the observance of the circumcision commandment. Yet the military presence must certainly have limited the range and intensity of the Samaritan rebellion. As previously concluded, during the course of the Great Revolt, although the Samaritans only carried out one independent action in which they may have tried to rebuild their temple on Mount Gerizim, they did not participate in the long, drawn out events of the Jewish revolt.

As for the Bar Kokhba revolt, at this time as well, the Samaritans had no common aims with the Jewish rebels. Hence, the main question that, in my opinion, has to be asked is not whether the Samaritans took part in the Second Revolt, but how the Samaritans reacted to the erection of the temple to Zeus the Highest on the sacred Mount Gerizim and to the prohibition to practice circumcision that had been imposed upon them. Were these given no response by them? In my view, the rural Samaritan population rebelled against Hadrian during the same period as the events of the Bar Kokhba revolt, but they did not fight together with the Jewish rebels; they did so separately in their own area.⁷⁹

Had the national religious feelings of the Samaritans vanished since the events of 67 CE? Apparently, the extent of the Samaritan rebellion was limited, and most of the Samaritan population reconciled themselves—either willingly or under duress—with the actions of the emperor. As a result, not much damage was caused to the Samaritan population. The late Samaritan sources do not even mention Bar Kokhba,⁸⁰ but is this a reason to reject the fact that they preserve fragments of historical information that could explain the behavior

78 Applebaum, “Results,” 240. He concluded from the strategic road from Tulkarem south of Kiviah and from some fortified posts on this road, that the Roman military control of this road blocked the western exits of Samaria. In addition, he connected the abundance of agricultural field towers in Samaria to this issue. He dates and relates the abundance to the Second Revolt.

79 Zeev Safrai (above, note 46), 86, note 14. According to him, coins from Sebastia and Neapolis during Hadrian's days are evidence for Bar Kokhba's control over Mount Samaria. I reject this conclusion; I argued above that it is impossible to draw any conclusions from not minting coins in a certain period. For example, the minting in Neapolis stopped between the years 82/3–159/60. How should we interpret this phenomenon until and after the revolt of 132?

80 Pummer, *Early Christian Authors*, 79–80.

and reaction of the Samaritans during the reign of Hadrian?⁸¹ Since they did not revolt alongside the Bar Kokhba fighters, the Samaritan sources have no reason at all to describe Samaritan behavior during this period in any kind of connection with Bar Kokhba!⁸² And since the part they played in the events of that period was limited, they were the main beneficiaries of the injuries suffered by the Jewish population after the suppression of the Jewish revolt. They settled in the northern part of Judaea, the coastal plain, and in the Beth Shean Valley.⁸³ This is reflected in the following Talmudic tradition: "R. Abbahu said: Thirteen towns were settled by Cutheans during the time of anti Jewish persecutions."⁸⁴

After the Bar Kokhba revolt, when the Samaritans began to detach themselves from their urban and religious center,⁸⁵ Jewish-Samaritan relations worsened. This worsening of relations should not be attributed to the behavior of the Samaritans during the course of the Second Revolt, but to the proximity of their settlements that led to economic competition between the two communities. The sages began to regard the Samaritans as gentiles, and the reason for this can be derived from the words of Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai: This means that the words of Rabban Shimon ben Gamaliel, "For every commandment that the Cutheans observe they are more strict than Israel" apply to the period in which the Samaritans were settled around their religious center. But

81 Magen, *Flavia Neapolis*, 235–237; 260–261, notes 40–53 [in Hebrew].

82 Yitzhak Magen, *The Samaritans and the Good Samaritan* (Jerusalem: Staff Officer of Archaeology, Civil Administration for Judea and Samaria: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2008), which is a shortened version in English. On pages 47–48, there is part of the review of the history of the Samaritans in the Byzantine period. Magen discussed briefly the question of Samaritan participation in the Second Revolt. On page 57, note 37, he listed scholars who rejected and others who supported the participation of the Samaritans in the revolt. He cited my book, Menahem Mor, *From Samaria to Shechem, the Samaritan Community in Antiquity*, without referring to any pages. He wrote: "Mor's view is implausible" and in note 39, "Mor 2003; his view is neither acceptable nor plausible." Is he referring to the whole book that covers 350 pages? Or is he singling out my opinion that the Samaritans participated in the revolt? Why does he not refer to other interpretations of other supporters? "neither acceptable nor plausible"? And if my interpretation is so exceptional and not acceptable, then the burden of proof is on him! And he does it with undefined and non-cited quotations!

83 Idem, *Flavia Neapolis*, 235–236.

84 TJ, Yevamot, 8, gd. See also Qidushin, 4, 65c.

"אמר רבי אבהו: שלש עשרה עיירות נשתקעו בכותיים בימי השמד"

85 Yitzhak Hamitovsky, "Talmudic Traditions Concerning the Distribution of the Samaritans in the Land of Israel during the Mishnah and Talmudic Period in Light of Archaeological Evidence," in *Jerusalem and Eretz Israel* 3 (2000): 69–101 [in Hebrew].

after the settlement and demographic changes that occurred due to the revolt, the sages began to regard them as strangers, and this is the background for the Jewish traditions that regard the Samaritans as the cause of the catastrophes that befell Israel.

4.2 The Gentile Population

Cassius Dio:

*Many outside nations, too, were joining them through eagerness for gain, and the whole earth, one might say, was being stirred up over the matter.*⁸⁶

These words are the only evidence for the participation of non-Jews in the Second Revolt alongside the Jewish rebels. According to this testimony, a few scholars have claimed that some of the gentile population took part in the revolt, at least in its early stages, when success seemed to favor the Jewish fighters. These gentiles joined the rebels not for ideological reasons but in order to make easy profits.⁸⁷ Because these words of Cassius Dio are the only evidence for the participation of non-Jews in the revolt, some scholars have tried to find additional proof to confirm his testimony. Yadin, in 1960/1961, in an initial publication of the letters from the Judean Desert, published a version of the letters in Aramaic:

1.1. Aramaic Letter

1. Shimeon Bar Kosiba to Yehonathan son of Be'ayan and Masabla
2. Romans. You shall take Thyrsis bar Tinianus and you shall bring him with you
3. For we need him . . . Rabbeno Batniya bar Missia . . . be well.⁸⁸

The incomplete publication of the letter made it difficult to decipher, and its general content was unclear. The fragmented text led researchers to different

86 Cassius Dio, *Historia Augusta*, LXIX, 12. 2.

87 Oppenheimer, "Bar Kokhba Revolt," 68.

88 The Aramaic text:

1. שמעון בר כוסבה ליהונתן בר בעין ולמסבלה 2. [...] רהומיה ותדברון ית תירסיס בר תיתנס ויתה עמכן די אנתנו. 3. צריכין להן [...] רבנו בטניה בר מיסה ... הוו שלם.

conclusions. Yadin linked them to the question of whether gentiles participated in the revolt. Bar Kokhba commanded Yehonathan, son of Be'ayan, and Masabla to bring with them a person called *Thyrsis bar Tinianus*, who was, in Yadin's view, a gentile cooperating with the Bar Kokhba rebels.⁸⁹ There is also a person called *Rabbeno Batniya bar Missia*, who appears to represent the religious leadership actively engaged in the revolt, even though this *Rabbeno* is not mentioned at all in Talmudic or midrashic literature and does not ensure he is one of the Tannaim.⁹⁰

In 2002, the letter was given full publication:⁹¹

- “1. Shim'on son of K[o]sibah to Yehonathan, son of Ba'yan
2. And to Mesabalah, and the son of Hayyata: My brothers, Peace! Pack up
3. (the goods) for transporting; and the youths-that you bring (them along) with these,
4. so that there will be no punishment (exacted) from you. And I
5. am exacting (or: shall exact) punishment, as is proper, from the Romans (or: and bring the Romans) and transport
6. Theodosius (or Tyrus), son of Theodorus, and let him come
7. with you, for we are in need of him. And pack (baling)
8. over the salt so that none will fall out of (or: depart from) your hands
9. and transport (this) by mules (or: in a covered cart) all according to [custo]mary practice
10. Fare you well.”

In the full publication of the letter, it appears that the undated letter in Aramaic from Shim'on, son of Kosiba, to his agents in Ein Gedi Yehonathan, son of Ba'yan, and Mesabalah, the son of Hayyata, included instructions for the transportation of goods and the transfer of one of the men in the camp. But

89 Yigael Yadin, “Expedition D,” *Isreal Exploration Journal* 1 (1961): 46, no. 11; idem, *Bar Kokhba*, 126. For a different supposition, he relates the name to a captor. See also Smallwood, 442, no. 58.

90 Birley, 271: “One letter refers to a Rabbi, previously unknown, Batanya bar Meisa, evidently at Ein Geddi.”

91 P. Yadin 56 (=5/6 Hev 56): An Aramaic Letter from Shim'on, son of Kosibah *Yadin Volume* 2002, 317–321.

1. שמעון בר כוסבה ליהונתן בר בעין 2. ולמסבלה ובר חיטה אחי שלם עמרו 3. די תדברון ועלימא דתיתון עמהון 4. ולא תהווה פורענתה מנכן ואנה 5. מתפרע\אתפרע ואות מן\ותיתון רהומיה ותדברון 6. ית תידסוס\תירסיס בר תידרוס ויתה 7. עמכון די אנחנה צריכין לה ועמרו 8. על מלחה די לא יפרק\יפוק מידכון 9. ותדברו בפרדיה\בפוריה כל [נו]מוסה\כ[נו]מוסה 10. הווי שלם

the complete letter raised a number of perplexities. First, the suggestion that Thyrsis bar Tinianus was a gentile who took part in the revolt was undermined when the letter was published in full. The father's name, Tinianus, disappeared from line 6 in the letter, replaced by the name *Theodorus*. In addition, except for the suggestion of two possible readings for the name, תִּירְסוּס or תִּירְסוּס, the preference being for תִּירְסוּס, and the mention of the father's name תִּידוֹרוֹס (*Tydorus*), Ada Yardeni did not say whether one can learn from the names about the origin of the man mentioned in the letter in lines 6–7 and that he had to be transferred from the camp in Ein Gedi to the camp of Bar Kokhba.⁹²

In the transition from the partial publication to the full one, the name *Rabbenu Batniya bar Missia* disappears from the letter.⁹³ In fact, the main contribution of the letter to the research on the Second Revolt is the war declaration of Shim'on bar Kosiba in line 5, in which he avows to revenge himself on the Romans in full.

1.2. Greek Letters:

1. Sou[]os to Yehonatan son of Be'ayan and to Masabala greetings. (when) I sent Agrippas to you. Hasten to send him back with palm-branches and citrons, and they will be kept (here) for the (ceremony of the) waving of the citrons (Feast of Tabernacles) by the Jews. They will not be used for any other purpose. This is written in Greek because of haste; we did not find anyone who could write it in Hebrew. Release him as soon as possible because of the festival, and do not do otherwise.

Sou[]os
Good-bye

This letter was sent from the camp of Bar Kokhba to Yehonathan ben Be'ayan and Masabala of Ein Gedi. The sender's name is damaged: Σου[]ος He notifies them that he is sending them a man called *Agrippa*, who should return with palm branches (lulavs) and citrons (etrogs) for the Jewish camp. The sender

92 *Yadin Volume 2002*, 320. See Yardeni's epigraphic notes in which she argues that the name תִּירְסוּס is a "highly defective Aramaic rendering of Theodosius, and תִּירְסוּס a close Aramaic rendering of Tyrus." The Aramaic father's name תִּידוֹרוֹס stands for *Theodorus*, See P. Yadin 11:37. Θεοδοσιος; *XHev/Se* 72:1 Θεωδριος.

93 Anthony R. Birley, "Hadrian, Circumcision, and the Bar Kokhba War," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 19 (2006): 673, note 19: "In the commentary on *P. Yadin* 56 Yadin mis-reading is silently ignored—a pity; so the phantom "Batniya bar Missia has dissolved without traces."

of the letter explains that he is writing this letter in Greek because they did not have anyone with them who knew Hebrew (or Aramaic). Because of the name of the sender, its language, and the fact that the writer calls the camp of Bar Kokhba *the Jewish camp*, Yadin believed that the sender was a gentile.⁹⁴ Lifshitz, who published this letter, completed the name Σου [] ος, according to the signature of the sender of the letter as Σουμαῖος. He also claimed that this was a Greek transcription of the name of Shimon, leader of the revolt, who sent the letter. Therefore, he asserted that there was no basis for the assumption that the sender was a gentile.⁹⁵ Yadin rejected the interpretation of Lifshitz and claimed that the sender was a gentile; that the letter was not sent from the camp of Bar Kokhba, but from Kiryat Arabiya; and that one cannot derive from it that letters written in the Greek language were sent from the command post of the leader of the revolt.⁹⁶ Ever since the first publication of the letter, it has been widely studied in the research literature, which focused on linguistic matters (e.g., Jewish Aramaic, Nabataean Aramaic, and the prevalence of the Greek language in Palestine) and questions directly connected to the Second Revolt.⁹⁷

1. P. Yadin 52:

In a complete publication of the documents from the Cave of Letters, Hannah Cotton published the above Greek letter (1.2) under the title *P. Yadin 52: Letter from Soumaios to Yonathes and Masabala in Ein Gedi*.⁹⁸ In addition, she published an extensive discussion under the title *P. Yadin 52 and Nabataean Participation in the Revolt*.⁹⁹

94 Yadin, *Bar Kokhba*, 130–132. See also Shmuel Yeivin, “Remarks to Some Issues Raised within a Meticulous Study in the Documents from the Judean Desert,” *Beth Mikra* 24 (1979): 24.

95 See Baruch Lifshitz, “Papyrus Grecs du désert de Juda,” *Aegyptus*, 42 (1962): 241.

96 Yadin, *Bar Kokhba*, 130.

97 Dirk Obbink, “Bilingual Literacy and Syrian Greek,” *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 28 (1991): 53–54; Hayim Lapin, “Palm Fronds and Citrons: Notes on Two Letters from Bar Kosiba’s Administration,” *Hebrew Union College Annual* 64 (1993): 111–135; Gerhard-Wilhelm Nebe, “Die beiden griechischen Briefe des Jonatan Archivs in Engedi aus dem Zweiten jüdischen Aufstand 132–135 nach Chr.,” *Revue de Qumrân* 17 (1996) [Hommage à J.T. Milik]: 275–289. Luc Devillers, “La lettre de Soumaïos et les Ioudaïoi johanniques,” *Revue Biblique* 105 (1998): 571–572; Edmon L. Gallagher, *Hebrew Scriptures in Patristic Biblical Theory: Canon, Language, Text*, Leiden/Boston 2012, 114–116.

98 Yadin *Volume 2002*, 351–362. See also *SB VIII* 9843.

99 See Hannah M. Cotton, “The Bar Kokhba Revolt and the Documents from the Judean Desert,” in *Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered*, 143–152.

Cotton's translation of the letter follows:

"Soumaios to Yonathes son of Beianos and to Masabala greetings.

Since I have sent you Agrippa, hurry to send me wands and citrons, as much as you will be able to, for the camp of the Jews, and do not do otherwise. **It (the letter) was written in Greek because of our inability (to write?) in Hebrew letters.** Release him (Agrippa) more quickly on account of the festival, and do not do otherwise.

Soumaios, Farewell."¹⁰⁰ Cotton dated all the undated documents from the Cave of Letters to the final months of the revolt, to the days before the rebels fled from Ein Gedi and found refuge in Nahal Hever. The scarcity of etrogs and lulavs mentioned in the letter indicate, in her view, that the letter was written before the Succot festival and therefore should be dated to September or even October 135 CE, in accordance with the Hebrew date of the festival.¹⁰¹ Why the letter was written in Greek is revealed in lines 12–14. Scholars have proposed various answers to this question, including unwillingness to write Hebrew (Aramaic), lack of ability to write Hebrew, and the absence of a person who knew how to write in Hebrew. Cotton resolved the question by claiming that the writer of the letter, Soumaios, was not a gentile nor a Jew, but a Nabataean; and therefore he wrote in the letter, which was written in Greek, "because of our inability to write Hebrew (or Aramaic)". In her view, the name of the messenger *Agrippa*, and the name *Aelianus* mentioned in the next papyrus, P. Yadin 59, are also Nabataean names.

2. P. Yadin 59:

Letter from Annanos to Yonathes in Ein Gedi:

Annanos (or: Aelianus) to Yonathes his brother greetings.

Now that Simon son of Koziba wrote again (or: to me) to send ... for

The needs of our brothers ...

Annanos (or: Aelianus)

Greetings, brother.¹⁰²

The letter, which was sent to Yehonathan, who is called *his brother*, from a person whose name was partially preserved ([] ννανος), mentions that Simon ben Koziba wrote to him to send something for the needs of their brothers. From

¹⁰⁰ *Yadin Volume 2002*, 354.

¹⁰¹ Cotton (above, note 99), 151.

¹⁰² *Yadin Volume 2002*, 364.

the present state of the letter, of which only a few lines remain, one cannot decipher what it was that Bar Kokha ordered sent to the brothers.¹⁰³ According to Yadin, the name of the sender was Aelianus, [Αἰλιᾶνος), a common name during that period, which indicates that he was not a Jew, that this letter writer was a gentile who fought alongside the Jews and that he was staying with them in the camp in Kiryat Arabiya.¹⁰⁴ Lifshitz once again completed the name of the sender as [᾽Αννα]νος or, in English, Hanan.¹⁰⁵ This reading rejects the claim that the sender was a gentile. Cotton noted that one can identify the writer of the letter whether the name is Aelianus or Annanos. Both names were those used for naming Jews.¹⁰⁶ But because the letter was written in Greek, she also thought that in this case, the writer was a Nabataean who had joined the rebel camp.¹⁰⁷ In her reply to the question of how one could explain the participation of Nabataeans in the revolt, in a camp separate from the Jewish rebels, and close to the time when the revolt ended, she adopted the words of Cassius Dio quoted previously and accepted what he said as trustworthy evidence for the fact that the revolt had spilled over beyond the areas of Provincia Judaea into neighboring provinces, especially Provincia Arabia. To reinforce the testimony of Cassius Dio, she attached three other sources of information:

1. The *Ornamenta Triumphalia* decorations granted to the governors of Syria and Arabia for suppressing the revolts in their provinces¹⁰⁸
2. The mass exodus of Jews from Provincia Arabia who fled to Judaea after having lived for some time in Peraea¹⁰⁹
3. The letter in question

103 Yadin, 132–133.

104 Yeivin (above, note 9), 24.

105 Lifshitz (above, note 10), 278.

106 See *CJJ*, nos: 139, 578, evidence for Jews with the name Aelianus. See also Naphtali Lewis, *Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period*, Yadin, no. 18, 76–82. A marriage contract, among the signatures is the name *Hananiah*.

107 *Yadin Volume 2002*, 365.

108 See above, 354–362.

109 Tal Ilan, "Witness in the Judean Desert Documents Prosopographical Observations," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 20 (2001): 169–178. She argued that in addition to the families of Babatha and Salome, many Jews left Arabia and found shelter in Judaea. Cotton adds that they were mainly in the regions of Mahoz Eglatain Ein Gedi and the Peraea, but isn't the latter part of *Provincia Arabia*? See also my discussion above, 360–362.

Cotton thought that “only speculations are possible, but once having made them we may be on the lookout for the evidence to prove them.”¹¹⁰ In both of the first two testimonies previously discussed in relation to the letter in question, the presentation of the facts in the sense that she presents is problematic! The transformation of the letter writer into a Nabataean is mere supposition! On the basis of this supposition, Cotton alleges another supposition regarding the participation of Nabataeans in the final stages of the Second Revolt. This second assumption raises the questions of why the Nabataean writer of the letter (who is not a Jew) should seek refuge in Judaea and what was the reason for the cooperation between Nabataeans and the rebels. Here another supposition is added to the two previous ones. Within this framework, she becomes the dream interpreter of the Nabataean dream. It may be that, in her view, just as the establishment of Aelia Capitolina undermined the Jewish dream, the transference of the capital from Petra to Bosra in 130 CE shattered the Nabataean dream and incited Nabataeans to rebel against the Roman regime. Did the inhabitants of Arabia rebel like the Jews for fear of the cosmo-Hellenistic policy of the Emperor?¹¹¹

The assumption of Lifshitz and his reasons for the participation of gentiles in the Second Revolt are acceptable, but I find it preferable to rely on the words of Cassius Dio alone for the rationale of the participation of gentiles in the Second Revolt. The names mentioned in the letters were in use by the population in that region, both among the Jews and among the gentiles, including Nabataeans. Therefore, the evidence of the names is insufficient, and one cannot infer anything from that.¹¹² The use of different names mentioned in the letters and documents cannot serve to support the claim for the presence of gentiles in the rebel camp.

II. Genesis Rabba, 65: 20

R. Abba b. Kahana said: Never arose such great philosopher in the world as Balaam the son of Beor and **Abnomos of Gadara**. All the heathens assembled before Abnomos and asked him: Think you that we can subjugate this people?

Go round to their synagogues and schools, he replied, and if you find there children with voices uplifted you cannot **subjugate** them; if not,

¹¹⁰ Cotton (above, note 99), 151.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 151–152.

¹¹² Yezkhel E. Kutscher, “The Language of the Hebrew and Aramaic Letters of Bar Kokhba and his Contemporaries,” *Leshonenu* 25 (1961): 126–127 [in Hebrew].

you can, for thus did their ancestor assure them, saying: The voice is the voice Jacob: When the voice of Jacob rings out in the synagogues, Esau has no hands.¹¹³

Applebaum identified Abnomos of Gadara with the Cynic philosopher Oenomaos of Gadara who lived during the second century CE. He was a friend of Rabbi Meir, with a deep knowledge of Judaism and was opposed to the cult and oracles of pagan gods.¹¹⁴ In Applebaum's opinion, the source preserves an authentic debate among the non-Jewish population in Judaea and the surrounding areas over the question of joining the Jewish rebels. Applebaum even linked this tradition with Gadara itself, where a burial inscription was found of a soldier who had served in Legio XIV Gemina.¹¹⁵ Applebaum's interpretation of this source relied on his explication of the verb 'להזדווג', to subjugate. He translated the verb as *to join*, and thus interpreted the Midrash as indicating the indecision of the gentile population about joining the Jewish rebels.¹¹⁶ However, the expression 'להזדווג' has a negative connotation, meaning *to join*

113 *Midrash Rabba*, Genesis. Trans. Freedman.

"אמר ר' אבא בר כהנא: לא עמדו פלוסופים בעולם כבלעם בן בעור וכאבנומוס הגרדי. אבנומוס הגרדי נתכנסו כל אמות העולם אצלו. אמרו לו: תאמר, שאנו יכולים להזדווג לאמה זו? אמר להם: לכו וחזרו על בתי כנסיות ועל בתי מדרשות שלהם, ואם מצאתם שם תינוקות מצפצפים בקולם, אינכם יכולים להם, שכך הבטיחם אביהם ואמר להם: הקול קול יעקב—זמן שקולו של יעקב מצוי בבתי כנסיות אין הידים ידי עשו, ואם לאו, הידים ידי עשו אתם יכולים להם" (בראשית רבה, סה ב)

See a parallel version *Midrash Rabba*, Lamentations, Ptihta 2; *Yalkuth Shimeoni* on Genesis, 115. On Esau and Jacob, see Harry Freedman, "Jacob and Esau: Their Struggle in the Second Jewish Century," *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 23 (1995): 107–115; Carol Bakhos, "Figuring (out) Esau: The Rabbis and Their Others," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 58 (2007): 250, 262; Ruth Langer, "'Brother Esau' Esau in Rabbinic Midrash," in *Encounters of the Children of Abraham from Ancient to Modern Times*, eds. Antti. Laato, Pekka Lindquist, (Leiden: Brill, 2010): 83–84. Mireille Hadas-Lebel, "Le thème des frères ennemis: Jacob et Ésaü ou Israël-Édom, de la Bible au Midrash," *Sens* 63 (2011): 195–202.

114 Felix Jacobi, *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker*, Continued. IVA: Biography, Fascicle 7. *Imperial and Undated Authors*, edited by J. Radicke (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 190–197, no. 1070.

115 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 57–58; Abraham Wasserstein, "Rabban Gamliel and Proclus the Philosopher," *Zion* 45 (1980): 259, note 7 [in Hebrew]; Joseph Geiger, "Athens in Syria, Greek Intellectuals of Gadara," *Cathedra* 35 (1985): 11–12 [in Hebrew]; Menahem Luz, "Abnimos, nimos, and Oenomaos: A Note," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 77 (1986/87): 191–195; idem, "Oenomaus and a Talmudic Anecdote," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 23 (1992): 80.

116 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 57–58; idem, "Background," 386, note 105. He also offers a different interpretation: The source deals with mutual education or citizenship, e.g.,

for a bad purpose;¹¹⁷ and in fact, it is only in this sense that one can understand the second part of the midrash. Accepting the interpretation of Applebaum renders the distinction between the two parts of the midrash as unnecessary, since there would be no need to distinguish between “the voice is the voice of Jacob” when the voice of Jacob sounds in the synagogues, and “the hands are the hands of Esau.”¹¹⁸

Another difficulty in the midrash is associated with the name *Abnomos* (or in other traditions: *Nimos*) the *Gadarene*, who could be identified with Numenius of Apamea, a philosopher who lived during the second half of the second century CE and was in sympathy with Judaism,¹¹⁹ or with Oenomaos of Gadara.¹²⁰ Identifying Abnomos the Gadarene with Numenius obstructs the discovery of any connection between the words of Abba bar Kahana of the fourth century CE and the Second Revolt. But even identifying Abnomos the Gadarene with Oenomaos of Gadara yields no proof from the Midrash of the intention of gentiles to join the rebels. It is difficult to accept that the Midrash and Gadara had any connection with the Revolt itself. There is no information about Gadara during the course of the Revolt. Even the burial inscription of the soldier who served in *Legio XIV Gemina* does not give any basis for this connection, since the part played by this legion in the second revolt is not at all clear.¹²¹

acceptance of Jews into the Gymnasium. However, how can we connect this analysis with the explanation that the non-Jews wanted to join the rebels?

117 See *Midrash Rabbati, Genesis* (trans. H. Freedman), 958. “All the Heathens assembled before Abnomos and asked him: Think you that we can subjugate this people.” See also Marcus Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (New York: Pardes Pub. House, 1950), S.V. נִימֹס. In Hitpaël and Nitpaël it can be “In a hostile sense, to attack, to join in battle.” For a similar interpretation, see Feldman’s criticism on Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, in Louis H. Feldman, *The Classical World*, 71 (1977): 217.

118 The preceding passage in the Midrash is a good example of the difference between “voice” and “hands.”

119 See Heinrich Graetz, *History of the Jews* (Philadelphia: 1956), vol. IV, 271. On Numenius of Apamea, see Stern, *Authors*, II, 206–216. See also *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, ed., Arthur Hilary Armstrong (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967): 96–106; M. Edwards, “Numenius of Apamea,” in *The Cambridge History of Philosophy in Late Antiquity*, ed., Lloyd P. Gerson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), vol. 1, 115–125.

120 Graetz, previous note. Jastrow, 8, entry *Avnimos, Nimos*. On the difficulties of his identification, see Donald R. Dudley, *A History of Cynicism* (London: Methuen, 1937), 162.

121 On the legion, see above, 164–165.

The difficulty of linking the Midrash with actual events that took place during the Second Revolt in Gadara makes it preferable to interpret the Midrash against a more general background. Applebaum himself claimed that one could interpret the Midrash in a general sense and that it could have been related to the subject of education, that is to say, the acceptance of Jews into the gymnasium.¹²² Hengel, in his discussion of the development of Jewish schools, quoted this Midrash as proof of the contribution of the schools that provided their pupils with the ability and strength to cope with gentile influences.¹²³

A similar interpretation was proposed by Freyne in his discussion on the cities of the Decapolis and on the ethos of Hellenistic Galilee. He also mentioned this source as an example from which it can be learned that the Jewish population living near Hellenistic centers such as Gadara could withstand gentile influence through education in the Torah academies and synagogues.¹²⁴ In view of these remarks, it appears that the Midrash has no connection with the events of the Second Revolt. At most, this Midrash and other sources similar to it testify to the relations between the sages and gentile philosophers who were sympathetic to Judaism and to some of its ideas.¹²⁵

In the prior discussion, I rejected the evidence found by scholars in various sources for the participation of gentiles in the Second Revolt. Nevertheless, I accept the testimony of Cassius Dio (in the abridged version of the monk Xiphilinus) regarding the participation of gentiles in the revolt. The claim made by Applebaum that because Xiphilinus was a Jew—hater, he certainly would not have been eager to invent the participation of non-Jews in the Second Revolt¹²⁶ strengthens the assumption that gentiles did indeed take part in the revolt. According to the testimony of Xiphilinus, the gentiles joined the Jewish rebels only in order to gain the spoils of war, and the motive for their participation had no connection at all with the reasons that induced the Jews to rebel. However, I view the reason given by Xiphilinus as a biased one aimed

122 Applebaum, "Background," 386, note 105.

123 See Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine During the Hellenistic Period* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 82–83.

124 See Seán Freyne, *Galilee, from Alexander the Great to Hadrian, 323 BCE to 135 CE: A Study of Second Temple Judaism* (Wilmington Del.: M. Glazier; Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1980), 143.

125 On the Avnimos contacts with Rabbi Meir, see *TB Hagigah* 15b, *Ruth Rabba* 2:13; with the sages, *Exodus Rabba*, 13:1; with Rabban Gamliel, the Fathers, according Rabbi Nathan, version B, 24b. See also Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 58. Moshe D. Herr, "The Historical Significance of the Dialogues between Sages and Roman Dignitaries," *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 22 (1971): 123–150.

126 Applebaum, *Prolegomena*, 57–58.

at reducing the value of this information. The participation of the gentiles in the Jewish revolt should be regarded as an act of social solidarity. Lifshitz suggested that the gentiles who attached themselves to the rebels belonged to the lower social classes in the Hellenistic cities, and some of them were slaves who had fled from their masters.¹²⁷ If one accepts this, then it was not only their desire to gain the spoils of war that caused them to join the Jewish rebels, but also their wish to improve their social status through the struggle against the Romans.

Roman rule in Palestine from the very time of their conquest gave preference to the Hellenistic elements that were concentrated mainly in the Hellenistic cities in the region. These cities were allies of the Roman government and enjoyed economic and social florescence through their close cooperation with the Roman authorities. In fact, the main strength of these cities derived from Roman rule, which favored them more than the Jewish elements in the country. Scholars have actually attributed one of the reasons for the outbreak of the Great Revolt to the hostile relations between the Jewish and gentile population, which was based on the close cooperation of the latter with the Romans.¹²⁸

I contend that a similar situation prevailed during Hadrian's reign. The policy of the emperor, which aimed at uniting all the subjects of the Empire, found a broad basis to fulfil this policy in the Hellenistic cities. During his visits to Palestine, Hadrian visited a few cities, such as Tiberias, Gerasa, Petra, and Gaza, and found a loyal population that was responsive to the challenge he set before it.¹²⁹ The main beneficiaries of this cooperation between the Hellenistic cities and the Roman government were the members of the ruling class, the aristocracy of the poleis. Below, was the subjugated and disadvantaged class that had suffered for generations under the class system so characteristic of the polis in the East ever since the foundation of these cities. This disadvantaged population had already, in earlier times, found in the Jewish rebels an ally that shared the same goals.¹³⁰

127 Lifshitz (above, note 95).

128 Uriel Rappaport, "The Relationship Between Jews and Non-Jews and the Great War Against Rome," *Tarbitz* 47 (1978): 1–14 [in Hebrew].

129 See above 189.

130 On the collaboration between the Gentile population in the Hellenistic cities with the Hasmonean leaders, see Uriel Rappaport, "The Polis and the Judaization of Eretz Israel During the Hasmonean Period," in *The Hasmonean State, Its History on the Background of the Hellenistic Period*, eds. Uriel Rappaport, Israel Ronen (Tel Aviv: The Open University 1994): 231–242 [in Hebrew].

Although the motives of the gentiles and the Jews to rebel against Rome were different, both of them shared a common cause in eliminating Roman rule from the country. The gentiles who belonged to the lower classes in the Hellenistic cities hoped that with the elimination of Roman rule in the region, the power and status of the aristocratic class would be reduced and, as a result, their own social status and economic situation would be improved. Their hopes led them to regard the Jewish rebels as allies in their struggle. Unfortunately, we are unable to estimate the range of their participation; we *can* claim that they did indeed take part in the revolt. The fact that Xiphilinus noted this participation indicates that the Second Revolt was a real struggle conducted by some of the gentile population alongside the Jewish fighters.

4.3 Christians and Jewish Christians

While uncertainty surrounds the question of whether the Samaritans and gentiles in Palestine participated in the Second Revolt alongside the Bar Kokhba fighters or whether they did so as rebels who fought on their own against the Roman regime, such uncertainty does not exist at all with regard to the third component of the non-Jewish population, the Christians or the Jewish Christians.¹³¹ This, despite the fact that in recent years, a number of studies have been written that present the question of the participation or non-participation of the Christians and Jewish Christians in the Second Revolt from a different point of view.¹³²

¹³¹ See Daniel Boyarin, "Rethinking Jewish Christianity: An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category (To which is appended a correction of my Borderlines)," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 99 (2009): 7–36. Note his preference for naming them "Jewish followers" instead of "Jewish Christians."

¹³² Jonathan Bourgel, *Jewish Christians and Other Religious Groups in Judaea from the Great Revolt to the Bar-Kokhba War*, Ph.D. Diss. (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 2009), especially chapter v: "In the Storm of the Bar Kokhba Revolt," 243–328. I would like to thank Dr. Bourgel for allowing me to read an enlarged and updated version, "Les Judéo-chrétiens dans la tourmente de la Seconde Révolte juive (132–135/6 EC)," before its publication. Isaac W. Oliver, "Jewish Followers of Jesus and the Bar Kokhba Revolt: Re-examining the Christian Sources," in *Winning Revolutions: The Psychological Dynamics of Revolution: Religious Revolts*. Vol. 1 of *Winning Revolutions: The Psychology of Successful Revolts for Freedom, Fairness, and Rights*, ed., Harold J. Ellens (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Praeger 2014): 109–120. My thanks to Dr. Oliver, who permitted me to read the article before its publication.

I have limited the territorial range of the Second Revolt and rejected the claim that Jerusalem was conquered by the rebels; recall now that the concentration of Jewish Christian settlements was mainly outside that territorial range. Therefore, the possibility that Jewish Christians took part in that revolt is not at all plausible. I already rejected the attempt to regard the Murabba'at letter that mentions the *Galileans* as evidence for the participation of the Galilee in the revolt or for the identification of the Galileans as Jewish-Christians.¹³³ A significant part of the Jewish-Christian community was congregated in Jerusalem, which was outside the range of the revolt. In fact, it may be assumed that attempts to recruit Jewish-Christians as participants in the revolt relate solely to those who were living within the area to which the revolt had spread.¹³⁴

From the various sources that refer to Jewish Christians in connection with the Second Revolt, it is clear beyond all doubt that they did not participate in the revolt in any manner. Therefore, all that remains to do is to clarify *why*, according to these sources, they did not participate. The Jewish sources that describe the Second Revolt completely ignore the Christian element that existed in Palestine during the period in question.¹³⁵ This is not a deliberate oversight, but reflects the reality that prevailed in the region during the period before the revolt and during its course. The Christian population, with its different sects, desired to detach itself from Judaism, just as Judaism wanted to cast off all Christian sects. Goodblatt assumed that the “break between Judaism and Christianity resulted from the process of self definition on both sides, and not through the unilateral actions of one side . . .” and claimed that “it was improbable that the inclusion of the Minim as the twelfth benediction was meant to lead to the separation of Christianity from Judaism or that it led to this.”¹³⁶ These words clarify the situation with regard to the Christian

133 See above, 395–397.

134 Bourgel, (above, note 132), in diss., 260–268.

135 Gustaf H. Dalman, *Jesus Christ in the Talmud, Midrash, Zohar and the Liturgy of the Synagogue* (with Heinrich Laible. Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, 1893, Repr. New York: Arno Press, 1973), 71–79, referring to *BT* Sanhedrin 43a, as a possible reference to Christians during the Bar Kokhba revolt.

136 Goodblatt, “Jews of Eretz Israel,” 180–181. Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 288–294. The common assumption was that the Birkat Ha-Minim caused the rejection of the various Christian sects from Judaism. This interpretation was refuted in some studies. See Asher Finkel, “Yavneh’s Liturgy and Early Christianity,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 18 (1981): 231–250; Reuven Kimmelman, “Birkat Ha-Minim and the Lack of Evidence for an Anti-Christian Jewish Prayer in Late Antiquity,” in *Jewish and Christian Self Definition*, 11: *Aspects of Judaism in the Greco-Roman Period*, ed. Ed. P. Sanders (London SCM Press, 1981): 226–244, 391–403. For a detailed summary of all the aspects of the Birkat Ha-Minim, see Yaakov

population during the course of the Second Revolt. In fact, ever since the Great Revolt, the Jewish-Christians endeavored to separate themselves from the Jewish population. It may be that the vague tradition of their flight from Jerusalem to Pella in 67/68 CE, which is interwoven with their eschatological perception of the events of the Great Revolt and the destruction of Jerusalem, preserves a historical echo of this process of separation.¹³⁷ The church father Epiphanius testified to the return of the Christians from Pella to Jerusalem and linked this event to the first visit of Hadrian to Palestine. Even if scholars doubt the reliability of this tradition, it is clear that during the period between the two revolts, a Jewish-Christian community continued to exist in Jerusalem, and alongside it, a community of gentile Christians gradually emerged.¹³⁸

The relations between the Jews and the various Christian sects became increasingly aggravated after the Great Revolt, but not specifically because of their non-participation in the revolt and their exodus from Jerusalem. Not all the Jews of Palestine took part in the revolt; and even among the Jewish population, there were those who had opposed the revolt from the very beginning and tried to calm the violent spirit of the rebels. Thus, one cannot use national and political reasons to explain the gradually expanding schism between the Jews and the Christian sects after the Great Revolt and the destruction of the Temple. If, until then, a degree of tolerance had been shown toward the different sects that arose over the years, after the destruction, such factionalism and sectarianism were real dangers for the continued existence and unity of the Jewish nation. Indeed, after the Great Revolt and the destruction of the Second Temple, Jewish leadership aimed to eliminate or totally repudiate

Teppler, *Birkat haMinim: Jews and Christians in Conflict in the Ancient World* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2007). See also Günter Stemberger, "Birkat Ha-minim and the Separation of Christians and Jews," in *Judaea-Palaestina, Babylon and Rome: Jews in Antiquity*, eds. Benjamin Isaac and Yuval Shahar (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2012): 75–88; Ruth Langer, *Cursing the Christians? A History of the Birkat Haminim* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 16–39.

137 Eusebius, *HE*, III, 5, 3–4. For a wide-ranging summary on the tradition of the Christian flight to Pella, see Jonathan Bourgel, "The Jewish-Christian's Move from Jerusalem as a Pragmatic Choice," in *Studies in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity: Text and Context*, ed. Dan Jaffé (Leiden: Brill, 2010): 107–137.

138 Epiphanius, *De Mensuris et Ponderibus* XIV–XV (PG 43, col 261–262). On Pella, see Robert H. Smith, *Pella of the Decapolis*, vol. 1, *The 1967 Season of the College of Wooster Expedition to Pella* (The College Wooster 1973): 47–48; Anthony W. McNicoll et al. eds., *Pella in Jordan 2: The Second Interim Report of the Joint University of Sydney and the College of Wooster Excavations at Pella, 1982–1985* (Sydney: Meditarch, 1992).

those factional sects in the long, continuing process of the rehabilitation and definition of Judaism.¹³⁹ Actually, one might say this aim was achieved in full, since one of the characteristics of the Yavne period is the disappearance of the Jewish sects and the rejection of two that refused to disappear, the Samaritan sect and the Christian sect, both of which preferred to define themselves outside Judaism. This knowledge makes it easier to understand the position of the Church Fathers and the other Christian sources on the Second Revolt; and explains why they gave a prominent place to the revolt, focusing their descriptions on its leader and the situation of the Christian community during its course. Through these descriptions, the Christian traditions tried to justify the fateful doom and destiny of Judaism. In the actions of Bar Kokhba and the events of revolt, the traditions found a wealth of evidence and indications of the fulfillment of the many prophecies for the fate of Judaism and the Jews. The Christian sources that describe the figure and personality of Bar Kokhba give prominence mainly to his being a false messiah, who deceived his followers and brought catastrophe to his supporters.

The *Apocalypse of Peter* in its Ethiopian translation, which was written a few years after the Bar Kokhba revolt, presents the fig tree parable as an indirect reference to the events of the revolt:¹⁴⁰

Apocalypse of Peter, Chapter 2:

‘And you learn a parable from the fig-tree: as soon as its shoots have come forth and the twigs grown, the end of the world shall come.’ And I, Peter, answered and said to him, ‘Interpret the fig-tree to me: how can we understand it?’ ... And the Master answered and said to me, ‘Do you not understand that the fig-tree is the house of Israel? ... Have you not understood that the fig-tree is the house of Israel? Verily I say to you, when its twigs have sprouted forth in the last days, then shall false Christs

139 Shaye J.D. Cohen “The Significance of Yavneh: Pharisees, Rabbis and the End of Jewish Sectarianism,” in *The Significance of Yavneh and Other Essays in Jewish Hellenism*, by Shaye J.D. Cohen (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 44–70.

140 Richard Bauckham, “Jews and Jewish Christians in the Land of Israel at the Time of the Bar Kokhba War with Special Reference to the Apocalypse of Peter,” in *Tolerance and Intolerance in Early Judaism*, eds. Graham. N. Stanton, Guy G. Stroumsa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 230–231; idem, *The Fate of the Dead: Studies on the Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), chapter 8: “A Jewish Christians Apocalypse from the Time of the Bar Kokhba,” 160–194; idem, “The Apocalypse of Peter: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba,” *Apocrypha* 5 (1994): 7–111; see also Schäfer, 61–61.

come and awake expectation, saying, "I am the Christ who has now come into the world." And when they perceive the wickedness of their deeds they shall turn away and deny him whom our fathers praised, the first Christ whom they crucified and therein sinned a great sin. But this **deceiver** is not the Christ. And when they reject him, **he shall slay them** with the sword, and there shall be many martyrs.¹⁴¹

The *Apocalypse of Peter* describes the leader of the revolt as one who had declared himself the messiah; but, according to this source, he was a false messiah who, together with those who followed him, attacked the faithful believers in Jesus.

Eusebius describes Bar Kokhba in a similar manner:

Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History (HE) 4.6.1–4 (above 122)

At that time a certain Bar Cochebas by name, which means 'star,' was the general of the Jews, who among other characteristics was a cut-throat and a bandit, but who relied on his name, as if dealing with slaves, and boasted that he was a star that had come down from heaven to shed light upon them in their misery.¹⁴²

Hieronymus gives us a description of Bar Kokhba as a conjurer of magical tricks, through which he gained many supporters:

Jerome, Against Rufinus 3.31:

and just as that famed Bar Chochbas, the instigator of the Jewish uprising, kept fanning a lighted blade of straw in his mouth with puffs of breath so as to give the impression that he was spewing out flames¹⁴³

141 Translation by James K. Elliott, *Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 600–609.

142 Eusebius, *HE* IV 6, 2. There exist similar traditions among Christian chroniclers. See, for example, the tradition of the Syrian Patriarch Michael I, who lived in the twelfth century, who notes that Bar Kokhba "sought those who did not acknowledge him and killed them." See Yeivin, 194–195.

143 Hieronymus, *Adversus Rufinum*, III, 31 (PL, T. 23 col. 502). *Dogmatic and Polemical Works*, Saint Jerome, trans. John N. Hritzu (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1965).

The sources dealing with the situation of the Jewish-Christians during the period of the Second Revolt, which were written a few generations later, describe their persecution by the leader of the revolt and his fighters. From these sources, there emerge two different reasons for the persecution of the Christians:

a. The religious reason. Since Bar Kokhba was a false messiah, the Christians could not acknowledge his messianic claims. And because of their refusal to acknowledge the messianic nature of the leader of the revolt and deny their belief in Jesus as the true messiah, they were persecuted by Bar Kokhba and his fighters. This reason can be derived from the words of Eusebius who cites Justin, a contemporary of the revolt:

Justin, *First Apology* 31.6: (above 136)

For in the Jewish War which now happened just recently, Bar Kocheba, (βαρχωχέβας) the leader of the Jewish revolt, ordered that Christians alone should be led away to terrible punishments unless they would deny Jesus the Messiah and blaspheme.¹⁴⁴

b. The military reason. Bar Kokhba declared a general recruitment among the Jewish population in Palestine, and because of the refusal of the Christians to join the rebels they were persecuted by him and his fighters. This is attested to by Eusebius in his Chronicle for the year 133 CE:

Eusebius, *Chronicle*, Hadrian, Year 17:

Cochebas, the duke of the Jewish sect, killed the Christians with all kinds of persecutions, when they refused to help him against the Roman troops.¹⁴⁵

144 Eusebius, *HE* IV, 8, 4 citing Justin, *Apol.* I, 31. 6 (*PG* 6, col. 375–378). Translation of Bauckham, “Jews and Jewish Christians,” 228.

145 Latin version of the Eusebius Chronicle translated by Yadin, *Rediscovery*, 258. See Yeivin, 184. For additional sources that relate the persecutions of Christians for their refusal to join the Jewish rebels, see the seventh-century Armenian version of the Chronicle: “Since they refused to join him to the battle against the Romans.” See also Jerome, *Commentary on Zephania* 1:15 (CCSL LXXVIA, 673): “Till this day the treacherous servants are banned from entering Jerusalem, since they murdered the servants of God and as well as the Son

Even though the source reason is interpreted by scholars as a military reason,¹⁴⁶ I do not believe that the refusal of the Christians to join the revolt can be explained on this basis, in view of the territorial extent of the revolt. The sources that describe this refusal also link it with religious elements, and all of them ascribe the refusal of the various Christian sects to fight together with Bar Kokhba to religious reasons. The Jews and the Christian sects during the period of the Second Revolt were each still undergoing a long, drawn-out process of self-determination. This process had no connection to the participation or non-participation of the Jewish-Christians with the Jewish fighters. The Jewish-Christians desired to break off their identification and ties with Judaism. This desire reached its apex at the end of the revolt when the prohibition against circumcision and residence in Jerusalem was also applied to the Jewish-Christian sects, as Eusebius testifies:

Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, (HE), 4.6.4:

The Church, too, was composed of gentiles, and after the Jewish bishops the first who was appointed to minister to those was Marcus. In Jerusalem the first bishop was appointed from among the gentiles, since bishops ceased to be appointed from among the Jews.¹⁴⁷

of God." See Abramski, 75. Fifth century, Paulus Orosius, *History against the Pagans*, VII: 13 "And he [Hadrian] avenged the Christians, whom they [the Jews], under the leadership of Cocheba, were tormenting because they did not join with him against the Romans," translated by Leon H. Canfield, *The Early Persecutions of the Christians* (New York: Columbia University, 1913), 209. Late seventh to early eighth century, Gregorius Syncellus, "Chronographia," Wilhelm Dindorf, ed. *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* (Bonn: E. Weber, 1829), 660. The twelfth-century Patriarch Michael in the Syrian Chronicles, "He (Bar Kokhba) forced all the people to go out with him to battle against the Romans. He killed many Christians." in Jean Baptiste Chabot, *Chronique de Michelle le Syrien: Patriarche Jacobite d' Antioche (1166-1199)* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1899 = Bruxelles: 1963), vol. 1, 176; See Yeivin, 194. Thirteenth-century Gregor Barhebraeus—Abū 'l Faraj: "And he used to kidnap and kill every one who did not agree with him."

146 Yeivin, 185, prefers this reason, arguing: "If the Jews wished to begin with religious persecutions they should do so to the Samaritans who were hated by them no less than the Christians." See also Oppenheimer, "Bar Kokhba Revolt," 70–71.

147 For a similar interpretation for the reason of the expulsion of Jewish Christians from Jerusalem, see Sulpicius Severus, *Chron.* 2.31. 3–6; See also Yeivin, 183; Oliver, above, note 132.

Even though the Jewish-Christian sects seemed to be the natural allies of the Jewish rebels, I have not found any evidence either in Jewish or Christian sources for any such cooperation between them. Jewish traditions completely ignored the Christians; and later Christian sources assigned a theological interpretation to the opposition of the Christians to the revolt: the refusal of the Christians to recognize the messianic claims of Bar Kokhba, which resulted in their refusal to join the army of the rebels.

Leadership of the Revolt

One of the complicated subjects in the study of the Bar Kokhba revolt is the leadership of the Second Revolt. Although the various sources that described the revolt gave prominence to the names of Simeon bar Kokhba, Eleazar Hamoda'i, Rabbi Akiba, and Eleazar Hacoen, no comprehensive description of the revolt leadership exists, and therefore it is difficult to portray it.

5.1 Bar Kokhba

The name of Simeon bar Kokhba, the leader of the revolt, was mentioned in many and varied sources. However, these sources raised questions as to his origins, his family connections, his social status, his position and function before the outbreak of the revolt, and the talents that gave him the power to be the leader of the revolt. Not all of these questions are answered in the sources. For some of them, sources give various answers and create a vague picture that is sometimes obscure. In order to clarify, note that until the discovery of the Bar Kokhba letters in the Judean Desert, one of the main subjects discussed by scholars dealing with the period of the Second Revolt was the name of its leader and his identity. Was his name Simeon bar Kokhba, and after the failure of the revolt, was he given the nickname *Simeon bar Kozeba* ("Son of lies" or "Son of deception")? Or was his name Simeon bar Kozeba, and did his followers who believed in his messianic role called him *Simeon bar Kokhba* on the basis of the biblical verse: "A star arises from Jacob, a scepter comes forth from Israel" (Numbers 24:17)? Was the *Simeon* mentioned on the coins of the revolt the same Simeon bar Kokhba, or should it be identified with Shimeon ben Gamaliel II, who was the president of the Sanhedrin after the revolt?¹ These questions were answered with the discovery of the letters in the Judean Desert. From them, it became clear that the name of the leader was *Simeon ben Kosiba*² and that the two other names, *Bar Kokhba* meaning *son of a star* and

1 Herr, "Causes," 2, notes 3–7. For a bibliography of the different assumptions, see also Schäfer, 51–52.

2 JDS, *Documents of the Cave of Letters*, P. Yadin 59, 365: "The Greek Σίμων, χωσιβα attestation of how the patronym of the leader of the revolt was vocalized . . ."

Bar Kozeba meaning *lies* or *deception* were epithets that were attached to him before the revolt and after his failure.

In spite of the assistance received from the letters regarding the name of the leader, they do not offer any help for the other questions posed previously. But I will try, despite the difficulties, to sketch the figure of the leader of the Second Revolt, Simon ben Kosiba, with the help of various sources.

King-Messiah?

Yeivin, in his book that appeared before the discovery of the letters, thought that the name of the leader of the revolt was Simeon, and that his nickname was *Bar Kokhba*. This epithet was linked by Yeivin to the place of Simeon's origins, *Kokhava* in the Netofa Valley. In Yeivin's view, based on doubtful Christian sources that described the persecution of Davidic descendants in the region during the period of Vespasian and Domitian, families of Davidic origins lived in this area.³ On this basis, Yeivin believed that the origin of Bar Kokhba on his father's side was the House of David and that this may explain the unrestrained support of Rabbi Akiba, who cited the verse "A star arises from Jacob" and crowned Bar Kokhba as the King-Messiah, for Simeon.⁴ Yeivin also linked Simeon's origins in the Davidic dynasty to the two brothers of Kefar Haruba who declared "We shall bring the crown of Hadrian and place it on the head of Simon," and "A king can only be the King-Messiah of the lineage of the House of David."⁵ Yeivin did not only make this claim that Simeon had Davidic origins, but also said that on his mother's side, he was related to the Hasmonaean family. According to various traditions, Simeon was mentioned as the nephew of Rabbi Eleazar Hamoda'i's sister, whom Yeivin identified with Eleazar Hachohen, the name inscribed on the coins of the revolt. The origin of Eleazar was Modi'in, the city of priests and the place where the first Hasmonaean resided.

In view of the origin both on the father's side and on the mother's side, Yeivin argued that "this double association, with the House of David from which the ruler of Judah was to emerge, and the Hasmonaean House, those who were the last to have liberated Judah from rule of the gentiles, certainly increased and glorified the favor and fame of the leader of the revolt among the people, and gave him the supreme authority that was not due to any of the

3 Eusebius, *HE*, 3: 19–20; 3: 32, 3–4, citing a tradition by Hegesippus about the persecutions of heirs of the House of David. See Smallwood, 351–362 and notes 79–80.

4 Yeivin, 63.

5 *TJ Ta'anot*, iv, 69a; *Lamentations Rabba*, ii, 2 (19). See above, 158.

leaders of uprisings against the Romans before Bar Kokhba and after him.”⁶ Even ignoring the explicit evidence that can be drawn from the letters that the name of the leader of the revolt was *Simeon ben Kosiba* and the fact that his nickname of Bar Kokhba is not connected at all to the place of his origin, the claims made by Yeivin cannot hold against criticism. First, his evidence for the existence of families tracing their lineage to the House of David to the Netofa valley in particular is based on Christian sources with doubtful historical reliability.⁷ Second, the family connection between Simeon and Eleazar Hamoda'i is also merely a supposition without any basis because it requires us to identify the latter with Eleazar Hacoheh, whose name appears on the coins of the revolt but whose identification is uncertain; and any connection with the Hasmonaean House is refutable. Besides, the discovered letters indicate that it is preferable to link the second component of the name, *Kosiba*, to Khirbet Kuziba, if to anything. After all, Khirbet Kuziba lies 8 km northwest of Hebron and is a place that was established previously in this book as the focal point of the revolt.⁸

Literary Sources

The scholars who attributed the status of king-messiah to the leader of the revolt did so on the basis of a specific source, the words of Rabbi Shimeon bar Yohai, in the name of Rabbi Akiba, who claimed that Bar Kokba was the Messiah:

TJ Ta'anot, 4, 68d:

R. Shimon bar Yohai taught: 'My master Akiba used to expound, "A star [כוכב] issues from Jacob (Num 24:19), A liar [כוזב] issues from Jacob.'" When R. Akiba [first] saw Bar Koziba, he would say, "This is the King

6 Yeivin, 64–65. Against the tracing of Bar Kokhba to the lineage of David, see Yaakov Liver, *The House of David: From the Fall of the Kingdom of Judah until the Fall of the Second Temple and After* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1959), 145 and note 30.

7 Eusebius, *HE* iii. 19–20; iii, 32, 3–4. Eusebius is citing a tradition of Hegesippus. See Smallwood, 352–353, notes 69–70.

8 Boaz Zissu, "The Identification of Biblical Achzib at Khirbet 'En el-Kizbe in the Judean Shephelah, and the Origins of Shimon Bar Kokhba," in *Go Out and Study the Land (Judges 18:2): Archaeological, Historical and Textual Studies in Honor of Hanan Eshel*, eds. Aren M. Maeir, Jodi Magness, Lawrence H. Schiffman (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 377–426; Schäfer, 25.

Messiah.' R. Yohanan b. Torta said to him, 'Akiba, grass will sprout from your cheeks and the Son of David will not yet have come.'⁹

The words of Rabbi Akiba, that Bar Kokhba was the King-Messiah, were an interpretation of the following verse: "A star rises from Jacob, A scepter comes forth from Israel; It smashes the brow of Moab the foundation of all children of Seth. Edom becomes a possession, Yea, Seir a possession of its enemies, But Israel is triumphant."¹⁰

The reply of Rabbi Yohanan ben Torta is also an interpretation of the same verse. However, contrary to Rabbi Akiba, who interprets the verse as a reference to a real figure, Yohanan ben Torta attributes the verse to a Messiah of the House of David.¹¹ The biblical verse that both of them interpreted and regarded as a messianic prophecy has been expounded many times in different periods and in various kinds of sources concerning messianic beliefs in Israel.¹² A study of these sources raises a number of interesting points that provoke some questions about them. According to these sources, messiahs need not be Davidic descendants. There is no mention in them about a real figure, and they mainly

9 Translation by Rubenstein, 56.

תני ר' שמעון בן יוחי: עקיבא רבי היה דורש דרך כוכב מיעקב דרן כוזבא מיעקב. ר' עקיבא כד הוה חמי בר כוזבא הוה מלכא משיחא. א"ל ר' ירחבן בן תודחא עקיבא יעלו עשריח בלחיין ועדיין בן דוד לא בא"

See a parallel tradition in *Midrash Lamentation Rabba*, ii 4, Buber's ed., 101. For a detailed study of the two traditions see Peter Schäfer, "R. Aqiva und Bar Kokhva," in *Studien zur Geschichte und Theologie des Rabbinischen Judentums* (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 86–90 [= idem, "Aqiva and Bar Kokhba," in *Approaches to Ancient Judaism* i. 117–119] and Matthew V. Novenson, "Why Does R. Akiba Acclaim Bar Kokhba as a Messiah?" *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period* 40 (2009): 551–572.

10 Numbers 24:16–17:

"דרך כוכב מיעקב וקם שבט מישראל ומחץ פאתי מואב וקרקר וכל בני שת. והיה אדום ירשה, והיה ירשה שעיר אויביו וישראל עשה חיל"

See Kevin J. Cathcart, "Numbers 24:17 in Ancient Translations and Interpretations," in *The Interpretation of the Bible*. The International Symposium in Slovenia, ed. Jože Krašovec (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1998), 511–520.

11 Philip S. Alexander, "The Rabbis and Messianism," in *Redemption and Resistance; the Messianic Hopes of Jews and Christians in Antiquity*, eds. Markus Bockmuehl, James Carleton Paget (London: T. & T. Clark, 2009), 227–244.

12 Martin Goodman, "Messianism and Politics in the Land of Israel, 66–135 CE," in *Redemption and Resistance; the Messianic Hopes of Jews and Christians in Antiquity*, eds. Markus Bockmuehl, James Carleton Paget (London: T. & T. Clark, 2009), 149–157; Knibb, "Apocalypticism and Messianism," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, eds. Timothy H. Lim, John J. Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 404–432.

adapt the messianic prophecy to their own world view in general and to messianism in particular. This is noticeable especially in the various *targumim* of the Pentateuch, in which expressions like *star* and *sceptre* are translated and sometimes interpreted in all kinds of ways. All of them interpret the verse as having a messianic reference, but they identify the messiah in different ways. For example, in the *Septuagint*, the phrase *a scepter comes forth from Israel* is interpreted as *And a man arose* (ἀνθρώπος) *from Israel*, while the Aramaic *targums* translated the words *star* and *scepter*, respectively, as *king* and *messiah*.¹³

In pseudo-epigraphic writings, mainly in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, the verse is interpreted as an allusion to the messiah, although they refer to the doctrine of two messiahs.¹⁴

Testament of Levi, 18:2–3:

Then the Lord will raise up a new priest, to whom all the words of the Lord will be revealed; and he will execute a judgment of truth upon the earth in course of time. And his star will arise in heaven as of a king, lighting up the light of knowledge as by the sun of the day, And he will be magnified in the world until his assumption.¹⁵

In this source, the new high priest is described as a messiah.¹⁶

The Testament of Judah, 24:1–2:

And after these things a star will arise to you from Jacob in peace and a man will arise from my seed, like the sun of righteousness, Walking with the sons of men in meekness and righteousness; and no sin what ever will be found in him. And the heavens shall be opened unto him, To pour out the blessing of the spirit of the Father, and will pour out the spirit of grace upon you.¹⁷

¹³ Schäfer, 54.

¹⁴ Brook W.R. Pearson, "The Book of the Twelve: Aqiba's Messianic Interpretations and the Refuge Caves of the Second Jewish War," in *The Scrolls and the Scriptures: Qumran Fifty Years After*, eds. Stanley E. Porter, Craig A. Evans (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997): 221–239.

¹⁵ John J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star: The Messiah of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Ancient Literature* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 88.

¹⁶ Yaakov Liver, "The Two Messiahs Doctrine," in *Studies in Bible and Judean Desert Scrolls* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1971), 173 [in Hebrew].

¹⁷ Collins, 90.

In the opinion of Liver, stress is placed in these two sources upon the superiority of Levi to Judah. The first source speaks about a savior of the tribe of Levi, under whose guidance salvation will come, justice will rule the world, and its scepter will then impose its dominion over the ruler of Judah.¹⁸ Both sources emphasize the superiority of the Tribe of Levi and the Messiah who will emerge from it. The Qumran sect, with its doctrine of two messiahs—those of Aaron and Israel—also interpreted the verse from the Book of Numbers in its various texts:¹⁹

Damascus Document, CD, 7:19:

The star is the interpreter of the Law who shall come to Damascus; as it is written, A star shall come forth out of Jacob and a scepter shall rise out of Israel. The scepter is the prince of the whole congregation, and when he comes he shall smite all the children of Seth.²⁰

According to Liver, the reference is to an eschatological prince identified with the future secular ruler, the messiah of Israel. Although his origin is of the House of David, this fact is not mentioned at all.²¹

¹⁸ Liver, 173–176.

¹⁹ García Martínez, Florentino, “Two Messianic Figures in the Qumran Texts,” in *Current Research and Technological Development Current Research and Technological Developments on the Dead Sea Scrolls: Conference on the Texts from the Judean Desert, Jerusalem, 30 April, 1995*, eds. Donald W. Parry, Stephen D. Ricks (Leiden: Brill, 1996): 14–40; Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “Messias Texte in den Schriften von Qumran,” in *Mogilany 1993: Papers on the Dead Sea Scrolls Offered in Memory of Hans Burgmann*, Zdzisław J. Kapera (Kraków: Enigma, 1996): 129–139; Martin G. Abegg, Craig A. Evans, “Messianic Passages in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *Qumran-Messianism; Studies on the Messianic Expectations in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, eds. James H. Charlesworth, Herman Lichtenberger, Gerbern S. Oegema (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1998): 191–203; Herman Lichtenberger, “Qumran-messianism,” in *Emanuel: Studies in Hebrew Bible, Septuagint and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov*, eds. Shalom M. Paul, et al., (Leiden: Brill 2003): 323–333; Albert M. Wolters, “The Messiah in the Qumran Documents,” in *The Messiah in the Old and New Testaments*, ed. Stanely E. Porter (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2007): 75–89.

²⁰ CD 7. 19–20 = 4Q266 3 iii 21: וְקִרְקֵר כָּל עֵדָה וּבְעֵמְדוֹ יִקְרָקֵר “וקם שבט מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל הַשֶּׁבֶט הוּא נָשִׂיא כָּל עֵדָה וּבְעֵמְדוֹ יִקְרָקֵר אֶת כָּל בְּנֵי שֵׁחַ” For the Hebrew text, see Elisah Qimron, ed. *Dead Sea Scrolls: The Hebrew Writings*, (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 2010): 16 [in Hebrew]. For the English translation, see Collins, 63.

²¹ Liver, 160–161.

Passages from Qumran Cave 4, 4Q252:

Whenever Israel rules there shall not fail to be a descendant of David upon the throne. For the ruler's staff is the covenant of kingship, [and the clans] of Israel are the feet. Until the Messiah of Righteousness comes, the Branch of David.²²

According to this source and others like it, which were discovered in Cave 4, the messiah will be of the House of David.²³ The reason for the emergence of this doctrine of two messiahs, which developed in the framework of the Qumran sect and in circles close to it, such as the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, is well explained by Jacob Liver: The fact that it was customary for centuries to regard the High Priest as the leader and ruler of the people, and the central position of the Sons of Zadok within the sect led to the consolidation of the Torah which placed the High Priest as the future head of the Congregation of Israel, as the Messiah of the House of Aaron, because of the unreserved authority of the Bible among the people of Israel in all its sects and divisions, every eschatological method required that the Messiah should appear from the House of David and that this title would be borne by national figures. Even when the figure of the eschatological priest was raised up, they could not ignore the destiny of the House of David in the Bible, and placed the Messiah of Israel alongside the Messiah of Aaron as the Prince from the House of David.²⁴

Rabbinical literature, without connection to the Passages from Qumran Cave 4, prevaricates over the question as to which is preferable to the other, the High Priest or the King: "These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth" (Zech 4:14). This is a reference to Aaron and the Messiah, but I cannot tell which is the more beloved. However, from the verse, "The Lord has sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a priest forever after the manner of

22 4Q252 5:3-4: "עד בוא משיח הצדק צמח דוד כי לו ולזרעו נתנה בבית מלכות עמו עד דורות" "עולם". See Collins, 62. John M. Allegro, "Further Messianic References in Qumran Literature," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 75 (1956): 174.

23 Kenneth R. Atkinson, "On the Use of Scripture in the Development of Militant Davidic Messianism at Qumran: New Light from Psalm of Solomon 17," in *The Interpretation of Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity*, ed. Craig A. Evans (Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 2000): 106-123.

24 Liver (above, note 16), 183.

Melchizedek' (Ps. 110:4), one can tell that the Messianic King is more beloved than the righteous priest."²⁵

The conclusion is that the king is preferred to the High Priest, although I am not prepared to accept the argument of Bliedstein that this preference is in reaction to the double messiah doctrine of the Qumran sect.²⁶ In view of what has just been noted, it is clear that the central demand for a king-messiah was to be related to the House of David. This is what arises from the dispute between Rabbi Akiba and Rabbi Yohanan ben Torta over the messianic character of Bar Kokhba. The very fact that Rabbi Akiba declared the messianic status of Bar Kokhba without reference to the fact that he was of Davidic descent indicates that Bar Kokhba lacked the legitimacy of this lineage. And Rabbi Yohanan ben Torta did not reject the character and qualities of Bar Kokhba as a messiah, but argued against his lineage. This is because he regarded the relationship of the King-Messiah to the House of David as a primary condition for being the messiah, and according to this standard, the messianic quality of Bar Kokhba is flawed.²⁷ This interpretation still does not grant that the dispute between Rabbi Akiba and Rabbi Yohanan ben Torta has the historical reliability to prove that the leader of the revolt was the king-messiah. A close study by Schäfer of a source in the *Jerusalem Talmud* and its parallel versions made it clear that even the *Jerusalem Talmud* refers to the leader of the revolt in the light of the results of the revolt and its failure,²⁸ and does not indicate that the leadership of Judaea during the Second Revolt was based on messianic rule.²⁹

The messianic nature of the Second Revolt and the messianic character of Bar Kokhba are given prominence specifically in Christian sources. Some of these sources interpret the verse from the Book of Numbers, but they do so in a negative sense in order to present Bar Kokhba as a false messiah who had

25 *Avot de Rabbi Nathan* (ed. S. Schechter, New York 1945), Version A, p. 50 A–B: "כיוצא בו אלה שני בני היצהר העומדים על אדון כל הארץ (זכריה ד, מא) זה אהרון ומשיח ואיני יודע איזה מהן חביב כשהוא אומר נשבע ה' ולא ינחם אתה כהן לעולם [על דברתי מלכי צדק] (תהלים קי, ה) הוי ידוע שהמלך המשיח חביב יותר מכהן צדק."

Translation by Judah Goldin, *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), 137–138. For parallels, see *Tosefta* Horayot ii, 9; *TB* Horayot, 13a.

26 Gerald L. Bliedstein, "A Rabbinic Reaction to the Messianic Doctrine of the Scrolls," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 90 (1971): 330–332.

27 Aaron Zeev Aescoli, *Jewish Messianic Movements in Israel: A Collection of Sources and Documents for the History of Messianism in Israel*, 2nd ed. (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1987), 58 [in Hebrew].

28 Schäfer (above, note 9), 119.

29 See Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 619, and Novenson, (above, note 9).

drawn many followers to him through cheap miracles and illusions³⁰ and misled his supporters by false claims of his origin. The *Apocalypse of Peter*, which is dated to a period after the Second Revolt, describes Bar Kokhba as one who had declared himself to be the Messiah and attracted many followers who sinned like him; but in fact, he was not the Messiah but a liar.³¹ Eusebius describes the leader of the revolt as one who had attributed superior powers to himself because of his name:

Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, (HE), 4:6:

At that time a certain **Bar Cochebas** by name, which means ‘star’ was the general of the Jews . . . but who relied on his name, as if dealing with slaves, and boasted that he was a star that had come down from heaven to shed light upon them in their misery.³²

Although in Eusebius’ opinion, the leader of the revolt was characterized mainly as a cutthroat and a bandit,³³ the Christian sources that present the leader of the revolt as a false messiah referred specifically to the name *Bar Kokhba* which, in Jewish sources, was interpreted as a proof of his messianic character. But the name *Bar Koziba*, which was given by Jewish sources to the leader of the revolt after his failure in order to present him as a false messiah, is not mentioned in Christian sources at all.

Previously, I presented the position of the Christians towards Bar Kokhba. The refusal of the Christians to participate in the revolt alongside the Jewish fighters was for religious reasons: the aim of the Christians was to separate themselves eventually from Judaism. In view of this claim, it is clear why the Church Fathers in later generations tried to present the leader of the revolt as a false messiah who persecuted Christian believers for their refusal to recognize his messianic status. These testimonies and the *Apocalypse of Peter*, which was written a few years after the revolt,³⁴ cannot serve as real proof of the messianic

30 Jerome, *Against Rufinus* 3:31: “and just as that famed Bar Chochbas, the instigator of the Jewish uprising, kept fanning a lighted blade of straw in his mouth with puffs of breath so as to give the impression that he was spewing out flames.”

31 See above, 405. See discussion above, 136–144.

32 The Fathers of the Church, Eusebius Pamphili, *Ecclesiastical History*, Books 1–5, Translated by Roy J. Deferari (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1953), 213.

33 Eusebius, *HE*, IV. 6.

34 See Abramski, 56–57.

nature of the revolt and the status of Bar Kokhba as the King-Messiah, as it was ascribed to the following tradition in the Babylonian Talmud:

Bar Koziba reigned two and a half years. He said to the rabbis: 'I am the messiah.' They said to him, 'Of the messiah it is written, *He smells and judges* [Isa 11:3–4]. Let us see whether he smells and judges.' When they saw that he was unable to smell and judge, they killed him.³⁵

This is a unique tradition containing a number of elements not mentioned in other Jewish sources that describe the leader of the revolt, some of which actually appear in Christian sources describing Bar Kokhba. The tradition used the nickname attached to the leader of the revolt after his failure, *Bar Koziba*. According to the tradition, he declared himself to be the Messiah, but the rabbis doubted his declaration and demanded proof from him through the signs given by the Prophet Isaiah for the *rod from the stem of Jesse*:

He shall sense the truth by his reverence for the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes behold, Nor decide by what his ears perceive. Thus he shall judge the poor with equity. And decide with justice for the lowly of the land. He shall strike down a land with the rod of his mouth And slay the wicked with the breath of his lips.³⁶

Since Bar Kokhba failed this test, the rabbis killed him. This tradition about Bar Kokhba comes in the course of the dispute between Rabbi Alexandri and Rabba over the interpretation of the qualities that the Prophet Isaiah required from the heir to the House of David, especially the significance of the Hebrew expression: 'והריחו ביראת ה' Rabbi Alexandri interpreted it as follows: "This teaches that he loaded him with good deeds and suffering as a mill [is laden],"³⁷ meaning that God loaded the Messiah with the commandment to do good deeds and with sufferings as a mill [ריחיים] would be laden. Rabba, who identified with Rabba bar Nahmani, who lived during the first half of the fourth century,³⁸ claimed that "He smells [a man] and judges, as it is written, and he

35 TB, Sanhedrin, 93b: אנא משיח אמרו ליה: אמר להו לרבנן: אנה משיח אמרו ליה: "בר כוזיבא מלך תרתין שנין ופלגא, אמר להו לרבנן: אנא משיח אמרו ליה: במשיח כתיב דמורח ודאין נחזי אנן אי מורח ודאין כיוון דיחזיוהו דלא מורח ודאין, קטלוהו."

36 Is. 11:3–4: "והריחו ביראת ה' ולא למראה עיניו ישפוט, ולא למשמע אזניו יוכיח. ושפט בצדק" דלים והוכיח במישור לענוי ארץ והכה ארץ בשבט פיו, וברוח שפתי ימית רשע"

37 TB, Sanhedrin 93b. "מלמד שהטעינו מצוות ויסוריו כריחיים."

38 Schäfer, 75.

shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears, yet with righteousness shall he judge the poor.”³⁹

If the tradition about Bar Koziba was indeed transmitted in the name of Rabba of the fourth century CE, the main question in relation to this source is that of its reliability and historical value.⁴⁰ Kolits claimed that the tradition was reliable and attributed Bar Kokhba's declaration about himself as the Messiah to the stage in which the leader of the revolt abandoned Jerusalem and took refuge in the fortress of Bethar. The abandonment of Jerusalem by the rebels was, in Kolits' opinion the bone of contention and caused a rift between the rabbis and the leader of the revolt. The sages opposed leaving Jerusalem and broke off their ties with the leader of the revolt. Bar Kokhba declared himself *the Messiah* in order to encourage his fighters for the final battle in Bethar.⁴¹ Abramski, who recognized the fact that the tradition was biased and reflected the views of Bar Kokhba's opponents or that it had the aim of justifying the failure of the revolt. Claimed that it contained a kernel of historical truth from the time of the revolt and reflected the main characteristics of a leader who assumes his own greatness and declares “I am the Messiah.”⁴² Kolits based the claim on the assumption that the rebels controlled Jerusalem and then abandoned it. However, as I argued, the rebels never conquered the city from the Romans.⁴³ Moreover, the assumption that a rift had opened between the leader of the revolt and the sages is based on the support that the rabbis gave during the Second Revolt to its leader and the rebels. Yet, as I will argue, there is insufficient evidence on which to base this claim.⁴⁴ Nor is it clear why Bar Kokhba was forced just at the final stages of the revolt and despite the difficult situation in Bethar, to declare himself the Messiah. If this declaration was meant to encourage the fighters, should it not have been made at the beginning of the revolt? But the main difficulty in what Kolits and Abramski said is the fact that the tradition is without historical value; it is a literary redaction

39 *TB*, Sanhedrin, 93b.

רבא אמר דמורח דאין דכתיב ולא למראה עיניו ישפוט ושפט בצדק דלים והוכיח במישור לעניי
ארץ

Rabba, in order to explain his interpretation about the ability of “smell and judge,” cited the tradition about Bar Kokhba.

40 Adele Reinhartz, “Rabbinic Perception of Simon Bar Kosiba,” *Journal for the Study of Judaism*, 20 (1989): 186–187. See also Schäfer, 75.

41 Hayim E. Kolits, *Rabbi Akiva: Sage of all Sages* (Woodmere, N.Y.: Bet-Shamai Publishers, 1989).

42 Abramski, 56.

43 See above, 287–288.

44 See below, 439–453.

that expounds the verses in Isaiah 11, a tradition that is based on the attitude of the sages of the fourth century to messianism in general and the leadership of Bar Kokhba in particular.⁴⁵

Efron, who dealt with the figure of Bar Kokhba in both Talmuds, claimed that “the figure of Bar Kokhba in his battles and his exploits was distorted in the versions of the Babylonian Talmud . . . The Amoras of Babylonia sifted, amended, and polished their records according to their dominant views such as ‘the law of the government is the law’ and their outstanding tendencies, positions and warnings against dangerous revolutionary and messianic outbreaks.”⁴⁶

Efron’s words made it very clear that one cannot learn anything from the Babylonian tradition about the messianism of Bar Kokhba. It is just this similarity between this tradition and the Christian sources, which are more or less contemporary, that indicates how later generations regarded the revolt and the question of Bar Kokhba’s leadership. Both the traditions and the Christian sources present the leader of the revolt retroactively as one who had declared himself *the Messiah*, and since his qualities did not correspond to their views regarding the Messiah, they presented him as a false one.⁴⁷

Two other types of sources that scholars have considered as evidence for the messianic character of the revolt and of its leader are the coins of the revolt and the letters.

Coins of the Revolt

The inscriptions *For the Redemption of Israel* and *For the Freedom of Israel* and the symbols of a **star** and a **grape cluster** that appear on the coins of the Second Revolt were interpreted as having messianic significance. Kanael thought that Bar Kokhba began issuing the series *For the Redemption of Israel* at the beginning of the Second Revolt after Rabbi Akiba had declared that he was the King-Messiah. In the coins of the first year, which carry this series, his name was engraved and he was described as *Simeon, Prince of Israel*. Kanael attributed a messianic spirit to the series *For the Redemption of Israel* that had accompanied the early stages of the revolt. In his view, as the revolt continued, and after

45 See below, 459–463.

See Oppenheimer, “Bar Kokhba Revolt,” 58–59; Schäfer, 58.

46 Efron, “Bar-Kokhva War,” 47–105.

47 Martin Hengel, *Die Zeloten: Untersuchungen zur Jüdischen Freiheitsbewegung in der Zeit von Herodes 1. bis 70* (Leiden: Brill, 1976²), 300, note 2. An English translation: *The Zealots: Investigations into the Jewish Freedom Movement in the Period from Herod 1 until 70 AD* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1989).

the conquest of Jerusalem by the rebels, the opponents of Bar Kokhba did not recognize that redemption had been brought by him and demanded that he give up the title of *Prince*. Since he was not related to the House of Hillel, his opponents recognized him only as a ruler and a military commander. Bar Kokhba renounced his princely status and his followers gave up minting the series *For the Redemption of Israel* that implied that Bar Kokhba was the redeemer. For the coins of the second year, the series was *For the Freedom of Israel* only, and only the name *Simeon* was engraved upon them without the title *Prince*.⁴⁸ In Kanael's opinion, the change in the series was significant: "As it is well known, the inscriptions on ancient coins give precise expression to the changes that occur in the form of government of the state that mints them. This is the case with regard to the declared aims of the governing authority."⁴⁹

According to Kanael, the recognition of Bar Kokhba's messianic status by his followers in the first year of the revolt, caused the messianic character of the revolt during this period. After a while, when many people began to doubt this status, the revolt took on a political character. The distinction between a messianic and a political character in relation to Jewish messianic movements in the ancient world is a very difficult one to perceive since most movements had political implications.⁵⁰ But even if we ignore this difficulty, Kanael's statements cannot withstand criticism. First, his words are based on a number of assumptions that are not sufficiently substantiated: the recognition of Bar Kokhba as the King-Messiah by Rabbi Akiba; the conquest of Jerusalem by the rebels; and the claim that the *Prince* must be a descendant of the House of Hillel.⁵¹ Without these assumptions, all the rest of his statements are baseless. Second, from the letters of the Judean Desert emerges a picture completely different from the one that Kanael suggested. The changes in the coin series, which Kanael mentioned, do not exist in the letters at all. For all the years of the revolt, the letters contained both series without distinction between them. Moreover, in the letter dated the twenty-first of Tishri, Year Four of the revolt, that is to say, two and a half months after the fall of Bethar, the writer of the letter still made use of the series *For the Redemption of Israel*.⁵² Therefore,

48 Kanael, "Counting the Years," 150–154.

49 Ibid., 154.

50 See Abramski, 89; Schäfer, 36; Hengel (above, note 47), 112.

51 For the argument that the Nasi has to be an offspring of the House of Hillel, see Goodblatt "Palestinian Patriarchate," 94–95. According to him this claim was a propaganda invention, without any evidence to prove it from the period previous to the end of the Second Temple period.

52 See above 263–265.



FIGURE 5.1

Temple facade, the Ark of the Covenant within; star above. Tetradrachm Third Year of the Revolt—134/5 CE.

as noted previously, it is preferable to regard the coin series as indicating real dates that were used during the war period, just as the letter series was interpreted. In view of this, there is no foundation at all for ascribing any supposedly messianic significance to the series *For the Redemption of Israel*, in contrast with the series *For the Freedom of Israel* that had political significance.

Kanael interpreted the star pattern engraved on the tetradrachmas, on which the façade of the Temple was also engraved,⁵³ as an indication of Bar Kokhba's messianic status.⁵⁴ And there were scholars who tried to link the star with the interpretation of the verse *A star arises in Jacob*.⁵⁵

Hillel Newman also interpreted the symbol above the Temple façade as a star. The records of astronomical observations in China in ancient times reveal that close to the time of the outbreak of the revolt in January 132 CE, a comet appeared in the skies and was interpreted as a sign heralding the coming of redemption.⁵⁶ But even this argument is not convincing. In most of the coins, the symbol that appears above the Temple façade is not identified with certainty as a star. In the book of Meshorer, only coin number 179 is said to have a symbol resembling a star; on coin numbers 180–181 and 199–200, the symbol is identified with a rosette; and on coin number 201, a wavy line appears above the Temple façade.⁵⁷ Also, the coins on which Kanael alleged to have found the star symbols are of Year Two and Year Three of the revolt, and it is only on the coins of year one that the star does not appear at all. In view of what Kanael has said before on the messianic significance of the Year One coins, we would expect that this symbol, if it does indeed have messianic significance, would have appeared specifically on them.⁵⁸

53 Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, nos. 179–181; 199–201; Kindler, *Coins of the Land of Israel*, nos. 97–98; 116–119.

54 Kanael, "Notes on the Dates," 44.

55 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 624; Schäfer, 64.

56 Hillel Newman, "The Star of Bar Kokhba," *New Studies on the Bar Kokhba Revolt*, 95–99.

57 See above, note 52. Schäfer, 64, notes 63–65, Listed additional possible identifications of the symbol above, the Temple façade. See also Lawrence D. Sporty, "Identifying the Curving Line on the Bar Kokhba Temple Coins," *Biblical Archaeologist* 46 (1983): 121–123.

58 See Schäfer, 65.

Kanael tried to interpret the absence of the star symbol on the tetradrachmas of Year Three of the revolt and the appearance of a wavy line instead by saying that they constituted another proof of the reconciliation of the leader of the revolt with public opinion, which did not recognize him as the redeemer.⁵⁹ Schäfer characterized this interpretation as *imaginary*.⁶⁰ I agree, but not because only the coins of Year Three clearly display the star, as Schäfer claimed by referring his readers to coin number 199 in Meshorer, but because Meshorer had identified the symbol above the Temple façade on this coin not as a star but as a rosette.⁶¹

As previously noted, on most of the coins on which Kanael identified the star symbol and gave it messianic significance, there is no certainty that the symbol was indeed a star. Moreover, the star pattern was engraved on Jewish coins before the Second Revolt, and those stars were not ascribed any messianic significance. The star appears on the coins of Alexander Jannaeus, and their identity is not in doubt. This is a coin with eight rays,⁶² or with six dotted rays.⁶³ The star also appears on non-Jewish coins,⁶⁴ and is a commonly used symbol, so no messianic significance should be attributed to it.⁶⁵

Some of the Bar Kokhba coins of all three years have the engraved symbol of a grape cluster.⁶⁶ Since on Jewish coins, the symbol of vine leaves frequently

59 Kanael, "Notes on the Dates," 44 and note 37.

60 Schäfer, 65, note 72. For a summary of the general difficulties, see Choi, *Jewish Leadership*, 195–196, note 181.

61 Yaakov Meshorer, *Treasury of Jewish Coins: From the Persian Period to Bar Kokhba* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi; Nyack N.Y.: Amphora, 2001), 158, identified the "Star" as a flower, and it served only as a decoration. See also, 345, no. 270.

62 Yaakov Meshorer, *Coins of the Holy Land*, The Abraham and Marian Sofaer Collection at the American Numismatic Society and the Israel Museum (New York: American Coins in North American Collections. The American Numismatic Society, 2013), 1, 281–262. He identified the "Star" as a rosette. See the coins in 11, plate 233, nos. 106–113. See also Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, nos. 8–10.

63 Kindler, *Coins of the Land of Israel*, nos. 8–10, no. 11.

64 On the Star on Seleucid and Alexander Jannaeus coins, see Arie Kindler, "Hellenistic Influences on the Hasmonean Coins," in *The Seleucid Period in Eretz Israel*, ed. Bezalel Bar Kokhba (Tel Aviv: Haribbutz Hameuhad, 1970): 299–300 [in Hebrew]. See also Paul Romanoff, *Jewish Symbols on Ancient Jewish Coins* (Philadelphia: Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, 1944), 2, note 11.

65 See Mildenberg, *Coinage of Bar Kokhba*, 43–45. Meshorer, *A Treasury of Jewish Coins: From the Persian Period to Bar Kokhba* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 2001), 152–153.

66 Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, nos. 166; 173–177; Year One—nos. 166, 173–177; Year Two—nos. 187–190A, 197–198; Year Three—nos. 206–209C; 213–215.

appears,⁶⁷ scholars have tried to find a special significance for the grape cluster that appears on the coins of the Second Revolt. G. Porton came to the conclusion in his research on grape clusters in literature and in Jewish art, that *cluster* in the sources symbolized a sage or leader, and in certain sources it had a messianic flavor. He also ascribed this significance to the symbol of the grape cluster on the Bar Kokhba coins.⁶⁸

Schäfer objected to some of Porton's conclusions. In his opinion, the sources upon which Porton had relied do not provide a reliable base for his position, and the attribution of these sources to Bar Kokhba only obscures them. Schäfer also asserted that if the cluster indicates a wise person, it would be preferable to attribute it to Rabbi Akiba rather than Bar Kokhba.⁶⁹ However, the decisive evidence against the conclusions of Porton comes from the coins. The grape cluster also appears on the coins of Herod Archelaus, on which it certainly could not have had any messianic significance.⁷⁰ The grape cluster cannot, therefore, have had any messianic significance. It is merely a symbol for the fertility of the earth, and no distinction should be made between it and the vine leaf, even though one is a rare symbol and the other a common one. The date palm, vine, and grapes are the fruits of the land, and are national—rather than religious—symbols.⁷¹

The Letters

In one of his later articles, Yadin stressed the messianic significance of the revolt. In his view, the successes of Bar Kokhba were interpreted as the acts of redemption, and Bar Kokhba was regarded as the Messiah. To bolster his claim, he mentioned a contract that had not yet been published when he wrote his article, and in which the date was given as “the third year of the redemption of Zion by Simeon bar Koziba.” Yadin's opined that, unlike in other documents, not only is the year according to the Bar Kokhba series mentioned here, but

67 Meshorer, *Treasury*, 150–151.

68 See Gary G. Porton, “The Grape Cluster in Jewish Literature and Art in Late Antiquity,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 27 (1976): 159–179. See also Robert C.T. Hayward, “The Vine and Its Products as Theological Symbols in First Century Palestinian Judaism,” *Durham University Journal* 82 (1990): 9–10, 18.

69 Schäfer, 66.

70 Meshorer, *Treasury*, 69–70, 79–80. See also Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, nos. 61–62.

71 Uriel Rappaport, “Coins,” in *Judea and Rome*, 135. Antigonus—Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, no. 31; Kindler, no. 22; Coins of the Great Revolt—Meshorer, nos. 153, 156, Kindler, nos. 73, 76; Second Revolt—nos. 170–171, 173–174, 176–177, 187–195, 211. Kindler, nos. 87, 89–91, 94–96, 103–104, 107, 114. 135–137. The vine symbol was very popular among the coinage of the two revolts.

also redemption and the fact that it was brought by Bar Kokhba.⁷² However, with the full publication of the documents of the Judean Desert, it became clear that Yadin was not accurate in the details. In the various collections that appeared, the document dated with *The third year of the redemption of Zion by Simeon bar Koziba* was not included. Therefore, Yadin's statement that in this contract, two phrases appear for the first time that were never found before in the letters (i.e., *of the redemption of Zion* and *by*) cannot constitute a basis for the assumptions associated with the character of Bar Kokhba's leadership!⁷³ As for the phrase *of the redemption of Zion*, it appears on the coins of Year Four of the Great Revolt, and there were some scholars who tried to give this inscription a messianic significance.⁷⁴ However, Kanael attributed messianic significance to that phrase and linked it specifically with Year One of the Second Revolt.⁷⁵

Because of the date that appears on the contract, I cannot agree with the opinion of Yadin, who thought that because of Bar Kokhba's successful exploits, his actions were interpreted as those of redemption and he himself was perceived as the Messiah. This claim may accord with the assumption of Kanael about the messianic tone associated with Year One of the revolt, which was a year of achievements, but Year Three was a difficult one for the Jewish rebels. The attack of Julius Severus against the Jewish fighters was at its height, and it does not seem reasonable that at this stage of the revolt, talk could have been about the successes of Bar Kokhba or that he was considered by his fighters as redeemer and Messiah. The phrase 'על יד' (by) appears in full in the letters and the other contracts in the abbreviated form of 'על יד'. For example, in letter 24 from Murabba'at, letter B⁷⁶ the date given is: *Year Two of the Redemption of Israel by Simeon ben Koziba*. The French editors of the letters from Murabba'at were hesitant in their reading and translation and translated 'על יד' as *par l'autorité*. In their interpretation of the expression, they noted other possible meanings, such as *dependent upon, on behalf of, by order of, in the name of* [the one responsible for carrying out]. In their translation and interpretation, they separated the expression 'על יד' from the date, *Year Two of the redemption of Israel* and thus avoided having to deal with the meaning

72 Yadin, "Remarks." 44.

73 For the different dates, see Hanan Eshel, "The Dates Used during the Bar Kokhba Revolt," in *Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered*, 95–98.

74 See Baruch Kanael, "The Historical Background of the Coins, Year Four," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 129 (1953): 18–20.

75 Kanael, "Notes on the Dates," 39–46.

76 DJD, II, no. 24 B:2 D:2 E:2 על יד.

of the redemption of Israel by Simeon ben Koziba. But Yadin commented in his discussion of this letter that their reading was incorrect and noted that “it was clear that the words ‘על יד’ which mean *according to the instructions of* should have been interpreted as ‘על ידי’ which refers in fact to the redemption of Israel and constitutes part of the date formulation.”⁷⁷

From the complete publication of the letters, it seems that the phrase ‘על ידי’ appears in various forms, as for example in P. Yadin 42, the lease agreement in Aramaic made in the first year of the revolt, where it says: “שנת חדא” “לגאולת ישראל על [ידי\ימי שמ] עון בר כוסבא” or *The first years of the redemption of Israel by the hands of/in the days of Simeon bar Koziba*.⁷⁸ In view of this and as I have already noted, the various statements in the letters do not have any abstract meaning; they merely transmit actual dates, as was customary during the course of the Second Revolt. A messianic nature of Bar Kokhba cannot be derived from them. The decisive proof in this matter is the inconsistent use of both series: *For the Redemption of Israel* and *For the Freedom of Jerusalem*.

Prince (= Premier—נשיא)⁷⁹

In my discussion of one of the possible titles of Bar Kokhba, *Messiah*, I characterized the proofs upon which scholars relied from rabbinical sources as vague and obscure. For this reason, those who asserted the messianic nature of the leader of the revolt were forced to search for other signs and allusions that would testify, if only indirectly, that the title *Messiah* was given to Bar Kokhba, and that he was indeed perceived as such in the eyes of his fighters. But the evidence for the other title that was ascribed to Bar Kokhba, *Prince*, is clearer and is at least based on sources. The title *Prince* appears in connection with the name of the leader of the revolt in different kinds of sources: in the coins of the revolt⁸⁰ and in the documents and letters from the Judean Desert.⁸¹

77 DJD, II, 118–133.

78 XHev/Se 8:2: ‘על ימי’; XHev/Se 49: ‘על ידי’.

79 See “Appendix A: Bar Kokhba’s Title נשיא ישראל ‘Premier of Israel,’” *Documents 2002*, 369–372. In the final publications of the letters, the title נשיא ישראל was translated *Prince of Israel*. See, for example, DJD 27, 8XHev/SE. In JDS 2002, it was translated as *Premier of Israel*.

80 Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, nos. 169–170A, 172–172A 193; Kindler, *Coins of the Land of Israel*, nos. 84–88.

81 See DJD II, documents B, C, E, I with the title: ‘נשיא ישראל’ D, F, G, J with the title. ‘נשיא ישראל’ DJD 27, 26 28 8XHev/SE נשי JDS 2002, 142–149, P. Yadin 42 (= 5/6Hev 42); 42–54; P. Yadin 44 (= 5/6Hev 44); 55–64; P. Yadin 45 (= 5/6Hev 45); with the title “נשיא ישראל”; 307–311, P. Yadin 54 (= 5/6Hev 54). An Aramaic letter from Shim’on, son of Kosibah, a wooden letter with the title: “הנסי על ישראל”.

According to these varied testimonies, the title *Prince* can be regarded as the only title of Bar Kokhba.⁸² A study concerning the significance of this title in relation to the leadership of Bar Kokhba during the years of the revolt requires a survey of the character of Jewish leadership and the Prince (Nasi) who headed the Jewish population during the period after the destruction of the Temple until the time of the Second Revolt. One of the main disasters for the Jewish population after the suppression of the Great Revolt was the disappearance of the Jewish leadership that had been based on the priestly and secular aristocracy. Among the priestly aristocracy, it was the high priest who played a central role in the leadership, both in representing the Jewish population vis-à-vis the Roman authorities and in the leadership of the local population who held feelings of high respect and esteem towards the priests.⁸³ Since most of the Jewish leadership had participated in the Great Revolt, many of them were killed in battle and the rest were deposed from their high rank. This left the local Jewish population without local leadership, which was an unbearable situation both with regard to the Romans and the Jewish settlements. Although the Romans placed a stationary force in Judaea and set up a provincial governor of senior rank, they preferred even then, as they had throughout the period of their rule over Judaea, to have a local leader representing the population of the province who would be responsible to the Roman authorities. The Jews during this time of severe crisis were in need of strong leadership that would repair the ruins of the destruction.

In the sources and research literature, the name of Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai is mentioned as the one who filled the vacuum that was created in Judaea after the disappearance of the Jewish leadership. But his main work in Yavne was to rehabilitate internal Jewish life, while his relationship with the Roman authorities was clouded in obscurity, even though the initial restoration activities were done with Roman agreement and perhaps even encouragement.⁸⁴ Nonetheless, some scholars engaged with the issue of princely authority in Jewish society claimed that Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai already bore the title of Nasi, a role that also included representation of the local population vis-à-vis the Roman regime. But there is no agreement in the research literature about this matter, and many scholars accorded him only

82 Thomas Witulski, "Der Titel Nāšī' bei Ezechiël, in den qumranischen Schriften und bei Bar Kokhba: ein Beitrag zur ideologischen Einordnung des Bar Kokhba-Aufstandes," *Liber Annuus* 60 (2010): 189–234.

83 For a detailed survey of the Jewish leadership before the destruction of the Temple, see Goodblatt, "Jews of Eretz Israel," 163–165.

84 *Ibid.*, 165–167; Safrai, "The Recovery of the Jewish Population," 27–30.

with freedom of action in the religious sphere.⁸⁵ On the other hand, with regard to Rabban Gamaliel II, there is total agreement that he served as Nasi during the years 80/85 and until 115 CE and was the first to be granted formal recognition by the Romans.⁸⁶ However, among those scholars who have agreed with the above assumptions, there is disagreement about the reasons that induced the Romans to give formal recognition to the office of Nasi and its role as the representative of the Jewish settlements in Palestine. In an article on this subject, Goodblatt summarized the various opinions that were widespread in the research literature regarding the reasons that led to the appointment of Rabban Gamaliel II by the Romans: a) The relationship of Rabban Gamaliel to the House of David; b) His father, Simeon ben Gamaliel, was the great-grandson of Hillel the Elder; and c) He was the legitimate heir of the princely title that his forefathers had held before the destruction of the Second Temple.⁸⁷ These reasons do not explain why Rabban Gamaliel was appointed as Nasi, only why he had inherited the title of Nasi; and they only concern internal Jewish motivations but do not explain why the Romans recognized Rabban Gamaliel. The reasons for his appointment were based on traditions that supposedly testify to the existence of a princely patriarchy for generations before the destruction of the Second Temple. For example, “Hillel and Simeon, Gamaliel and Simeon wielded their Patriarchate during one hundred years of the Temple’s existence.”⁸⁸

Besides the disputed historical value of this source and others like it, these traditions overlook one basic fact, which is that the Jewish leadership before

85 Goodblatt, “Jews of Eretz Israel,” 171.

86 The date of his appointment is disputed, see Safrai, “The Recovery of the Jewish Population,” 30. He dated Rabban Gamliel’s appointment to the year 96, after the assassination of Domitian. According to Safrai, it was only then that the political conditions were less difficult, and he was able to achieve his place in public leadership. However, Goodblatt relates his leadership to a Roman appointment, and he dated it to Domitian’s reign. See Goodblatt, “Palestinian Patriarchate,” 98. See also Ephrat Habas (Rubin), “Rabban Gamaliel of Yavneh and his Sons: The Patriarchate before and after the Bar Kokhva Revolt,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 50 (1999): 21–37.

87 Goodblatt, “Palestinian Patriarchate,” 93–97.

88 *TB Shabbat*, 15a. ”וזהתניא הלל ושמעון גמליאל ושמעון נהגו נשיאותן <לפני> [בפני] הבית מאה שנה”

If we identify the historical figures in this tradition—Hillel; Rabban Simeon; Rabban Gamaliel the Elder; Rabban Simeon, son of Gamaliel—then they lived and acted before the destruction of the Temple. For a review of the title נשיא in rabbinic literature, see Hugo Mantel, *Studies in the History of the Sanhedrin* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965), 3–63. See *Mishnah Hagigah* 2, 2 which counts the pairs (זוגות): one president (נשיא) and one Father of the court (= אב בית דין).

the Great Revolt was in the hands of the high priesthood. There is no doubt that the freedom of religious activity that was granted to Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai, who belonged to the priesthood,⁸⁹ filled this role, at least for the Jewish people. As for the Roman interests, Goodblatt believed that the Romans created a new position, the Nasi, which was meant to replace the High Priest, and through whom the Romans ruled over Palestine. For this reason, they appointed Rabban Gamaliel II to the position of Nasi, which granted him the status of the head of the Jewish settlements in Palestine. The choice of Rabban Gamaliel II was connected with his origin. Before 70 CE, his family was aligned with the Pharisees and belonged to the secular aristocracy; and during the course of the Great Revolt, they held moderate positions toward the Romans.⁹⁰ If we accept the assumption of Goodblatt, it may be that the appointment of Rabban Gamaliel II at the end of the reign of Domitian to a new position, that of Nasi, was meant to solve certain difficulties that the Romans faced in the province. The date of Rabban Gamaliel's death is not known, but his name is not mentioned in the sources associated with the War of Quietus, and it is assumed that he must have passed away before the Diaspora revolt.⁹¹ For the years 115–132 CE, there is no information in the sources as to the continuation of the Nasi position, which was apparently cancelled by the Romans after the death of Rabban Gamaliel. In Goodblatt's view, the Romans may have cancelled it or prohibited the appointment of an heir to Rabban Gamaliel as part of the sanctions they imposed on Judaea following the Diaspora revolt.⁹² But this supposition is difficult to accept since a recognized leader would have served the interests of the Romans in the region during times of emergency, such as during the period of the War of Quietus in Palestine. The reason for the cancellation of the Nasi position seems, in my view, to have been the inability of the Romans to find a leader of the same stature as Rabban Gamaliel for the Nasi position, a leader who would function both for the Jews and for the Romans. The events of the War of Quietus support my view. Alon listed eight names of sages—including Rabbi Joshua, Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah, Rabbi Tarfon, and Rabbi Akiba⁹³—who led the nation after the death of Rabban Gamaliel. Some

89 See Daniel Schwartz, "Was Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai a Priest?," *Sinai* 88 (1981): 32–39 [in Hebrew].

90 David Goodblatt, "The Title Nasi' and the Ideological Background of the Second Revolt," *Bar Kokhva Revolt. A New Approach*, 113–139.

91 Safrai, "The Recovery of the Jewish Population," 30–31.

92 Goodblatt, "Jews of Eretz Israel," 84; Goodblatt, "Palestinian Patriarchate," 100, note 52.

93 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 465–466.

add Rabbi Haninah ben Gamaliel;⁹⁴ but none of them filled the position of Rabban Gamaliel as Nasi, nor did any one of them gain the recognition of the Romans as the leader of the Jewish settlements.⁹⁵

This discussion turns now to the days of the Second Revolt, in which the leader of the revolt held the title *Nasi*. While the appointment of Rabban Gamaliel to the position of Nasi was by the Romans, the appointment during the Second Revolt was by the Jewish rebels. One of the central questions regarding the position of Nasi given to Bar Kokhba is the background to his election to this title. Before examining various proposals on the issue, I should note the words of Urbach, which are worth recalling during our study of this question: “The title of Nasi has a sense and significance only when in reference to a prince over all Israel, who stands at the head of the people, and therefore whoever speaks about the princes as ‘the leaders of the generation and its ministers’ who supervise matters of the spirit or as Talmudic scholars takes away all the real significance from the term.”⁹⁶

A summary of the research literature on this issue raises three main assumptions:

1. The background for the choice of the title *Nasi* is the prince described by the Prophet Ezekiel at the end of days. The Prophet Ezekiel equated the title of *Nasi* to that of King, and in Chapters 44–66 the Nasi is described as having the trappings of royalty. He is also connected with being of Davidic descent.⁹⁷ In view of these prophecies, Oppenheimer thought that the choice of the title Nasi by the fighters of the Second Revolt was made in accordance with the prophecies of Ezekiel. In his view, the granting of the title Nasi to the leader of the revolt was meant “to indicate an ideal king of the princely type in

94 Ephraim Metzger, “Rabbi Haninah son of Gamliel the Nasi of Israel,” in *Nezir Echav: A Book of Essays and Articles in Memory of Rabbi David Cohen the Nazir*, Jerusalem: Nezer David 1977, vol. 3. 163–180 [in Hebrew]. Ephrat Habas (Rubin), “Rabbi Haninah son of Gamliel,” *Milet* 2 (1984): 143–150 [in Hebrew].

95 Goodblatt, “Jews of Eretz Israel,” 183; Ephraim E. Urbach, “Class-status and Leadership in the World of the Palestinian Sages,” *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities* 2.4 (1966): 1–37 (= in *Collected Writings in Jewish Studies*, by Ephraim E. Urbach, eds. Robert Brody, Moshe D. Herr (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, Magnes Press, 1999).

96 Idem, *ibid.*, 4.

97 Ezekiel 34:24: “And my servant David shall be the (נשיא) ruler among them.” 37:24: “My servant David shall be king (מלך) ruler over them there shall be one shepherd (רועה) for all of them.”

the end of days prophecies of Ezekiel.”⁹⁸ Goodblatt accepted the claim of Oppenheimer, that the princely status of Bar Kokhba was based on the eschatological vision of Ezekiel. In his view, the Nasi doctrine, which was embodied in the figure of Bar Kokhba, was derived from the priestly circles and is documented in the end of days prophecies of Ezekiel and in the Qumran texts.⁹⁹

The main difficulty in accepting these assumptions is that the title of Nasi is perceived in the sense of King. As previously confirmed, the representation of Bar Kokhba as the King-Messiah is derived from traditions that ascribe this title to him in order to explain the reasons for the failure of the Second Revolt.¹⁰⁰ In addition, the claim that ideological-religious inspiration for the revolt came specifically from priestly circles is not convincing, as will be established later.¹⁰¹

2. The Dead Sea sect and its world view were a source of inspiration for the rebels. Devir is the main scholar who asserted the Qumran sect influenced the ascription of the title of Nasi to Bar Kokhba by himself and his followers. In Devir's view, Bar Kokhba embodies the ideology of the desert exiles, from among whom he emerged and was raised up: “He was the Messiah and he was the Nasi, and he was not of the seed of David . . . he also took a priest as a partner in the leadership and rule: Eleazar Hacohen, and perhaps also a personality from among the elite of the generation in the role of prophet: Rabbi Akiba.” Devir posited the Second Revolt was linked solely to the desert exiles. He negated the national-religious motives and the economic causes for the outbreak of the revolt and attributed it only to the belief that the end of days was near and to the calculations that prevailed in the ideology of the Dead Sea sect.¹⁰²

In view of what I previously wrote regarding the causes of the revolt, I cannot accept the contentions of Devir. Although the triumvirate of

98 Oppenheimer, “Bar Kokhba Revolt,” 51. See also Brook W.R. Pearson, “Dry Bones in the Judean Desert: The Messiah of Ephraim, Ezekiel 37, and the Post Revolutionary Followers of Bar Kokhba,” *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 29 (1998): 192–201.

99 David Goodblatt, “Did the Tannaim Support Bar Kokhba?,” *Cathedra* 29 (1983): 6–12 [in Hebrew]. Idem, “The Title ‘Nasi’ and the Ideological Background of the Second Revolt,” in *The Bar Kokhba Revolt: A New Approach*, 113–132 [in Hebrew]; idem, “Priestly Ideologies of the Judean Resistance,” *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 3 (1996): 225–249; idem, “Tannaitic Traditions and Dating Documents in Second Temple Judah,” in *Halakhah in Light of Epigraphy*, eds. Albert I. Baumgarten, Hanan Eshel, Ranon Katzoff, Shani Tzoref (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011): 185–202.

100 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 621–625; Yeivin, 87.

101 See Devir.

102 Devir, 108.

Nasi-Priest-Prophet derives from the writings of the Dead Sea sect, in available sources that are connected with the Second Revolt, no emphasis is laid on any such triumvirate that could testify to the influence of the Qumran sect on the fighters of the Second Revolt. The Prince-Priest connection is given prominence in the sources of the Second Revolt only in the coins on which the names of the Nasi and Eleazar Hacohen are inscribed.

The attempts by Devir to focus the revolt within the narrow confines of the Qumran sect area¹⁰³ also do not withstand criticism. This area was connected to the Second Revolt, but only its final stages, when the rebels found refuge there after fleeing from the battle arena; therefore, this place cannot be regarded as the center of activities and early training of the rebels. But my main criticism is against the claim of Devir for the messianic status—and not in the national and political sense—of Bar Kokhba and the proof that he found for this claim in the tradition of the two brothers from Kefar Harub, who wished to place the crown of Hadrian on the head of Simeon.¹⁰⁴ I have already mentioned this source a few times in this book, and I claimed earlier that its legendary character does not allow us to derive historical conclusions from it, including proof for the spiritual messianic nature of Bar Kokhba.¹⁰⁵ The title of Nasi cannot therefore be connected with the Qumran sect.¹⁰⁶

3. The title of Nasi originates from the first Hasmonaeans, Simeon and his son Jonathan (John Hyrcanus). Alon found that the title of Nasi given to Bar Kokhba derived from the title of the early Hasmonaeans: *Ethnarch* (Ἐθνάρχης) which he translated as *the prince of the people* or *Sar Am El*. In his opinion, “the rebels thus renewed the first Hasmonaeans regime which did not recognize kingship but only a princely status.”¹⁰⁷ The title *Ethnarch* is mentioned in the decision of the Knesset Hagdola (the Great Sanhedrin) with regard to Simeon the Hasmonean; this granted him wide authority as their leader (Ἐθνάρχης), High Priest (ἀρχιερεὺς), and general (στρατηγός).¹⁰⁸ The main difficulty in the arguments of Alon is the philological one, as Schäfer claimed.¹⁰⁹

103 Devir, 108–110.

104 Devir, 116.

105 See above, 98–103.

106 Schäfer, 71.

107 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 622–623; David Flusser, “The Apocryphal Book of the Ascension of Isaias and the Dead Sea Sect,” in David Flusser, *Judaism and the Origins of Jewish Christianity* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1988), 5, note 12. He translated *Ethnarch* as *Sar am El*.

108 1 Maccabees. 14: 27–45.

109 Schäfer, 68.

The translation of the term Εθνάρχης in Hebrew is not certain, and therefore Alon translated it to be two terms, *the Prince of the People* and *Sar Am El*.¹¹⁰ The second term, *Sar Am El*, which was also taken from the decision of the Knesset Hagdola, in Greek εν ασαραμελ is a transcription of the Hebrew and is deciphered in various ways: 'בְּעֶצֶר עִם אֵל', 'בְּחֶצֶר עִם אֵל', 'בְּאֶסִּיפֶת עִם אֵל', which means *the gathering that was held in the Temple courtyard*, and 'שָׂר עִם אֵל', which is the additional role that was imposed on Simeon.¹¹¹ Alon adopted the latter reading specifically, demonstrating that he believed that the role was not identical with that of the Ethnarch, which he had translated in two senses and were actually two different functions.¹¹² According to the reading 'שָׂר עִם אֵל' (*Sar Am El*), Yadin proposed that it should be regarded as a military title.¹¹³ Besides the philological difficulties, Schäfer raised another two difficulties with the content. According to him, there is no connection or continuity between the ideology of the Maccabean uprising and that of the Second Revolt, even though both revolts arose from a religious crisis. In his view, the Maccabean uprising emerged from the priestly circles, and Simeon, as Nasi, took over both the religious authority of the High Priest and the military authority of a general (*strategos*). Bar Kokhba did not belong to the priesthood, and we only have Eleazar Hacohen at his side.¹¹⁴

Contrary to the claims of Schäfer, other scholars claimed that the religious inspiration for the Second Revolt was derived specifically from priestly circles and found proof for this in the partnership of a priest in the leadership. In addition, there were those who claimed that Bar Kokhba himself was from a priestly family.¹¹⁵ The claim made by Schäfer that both revolts had a common ideology is irrelevant to the discussion about the title of Nasi, since the adoption of the title for the leadership of the Second Revolt did not require the acceptance of the ideology of the Maccabean uprising. It could be that the rebels chose the same title that the early Hasmonaeans had borne because of the impressive achievements they had won in their struggle against foreign

110 Menahem Stern, *Documents of the Hasmonean Revolt* (Tel Aviv: ha-Ḳibuts ha-me'uḥad, 1973), 133 (Hebrew). See also U. Rappaport, *The First Book of Maccabees*, Introduction, Hebrew translation, and commentary (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 2004), 322. He translated מוֹשֵׁל as *Governor* [in Hebrew].

111 Stern, *Ibid.*, 134.

112 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 622.

113 Yigael Yadin, *War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness* (Jerusalem: The Bialik Institute, 1957), 41, note 16. [English ed. trans. Batya and Chaim Rabin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962)].

114 Schäfer, 69.

115 See above, 425.

rule. On this issue, note the comment of Ben Shalom: "The title of Nasi is not of uniform significance and can indicate those with various positions that do not overlap and are not opposed to each other."¹¹⁶ In view of this comment and of the words of Urbach that "the title of Nasi has a meaning and significance only when it refers to the Nasi over all Israel," I perceive that all the attempts to find the source of inspiration for the title of Nasi given to Bar Kokhba ignore the personality that bore this title, as it was portrayed in the sources. This is a down-to-earth personality of a charismatic character. Research has tried to crown this personality with glorified terms such as *King*, *Messiah*, or *Nasi*, in their various senses. These attempts to understand why the title *Nasi* was given to Bar Kokhba overlook the facts that he was a leader of a revolt that was geographically limited in range and focused mainly in the area from which he had come, and that he had won the support of certain groups living in the area: sages, priests, farmers, and perhaps even foreigners.

The question of the title held by the leader of the revolt will not shed light on the matter of the wide support of Bar Kokhba in those limited regions as the unquestioned leader of the Second Revolt. This support was given to him not because of his title, but because of his personality and special talents. As portrayed in the sources, he is given prominence mainly because of the outstanding qualities, characteristic of charismatic leaders, that he possessed. He was a man after whom, in times of crisis, the masses would follow without hesitation. The sources glorify his great strength and sometimes exaggerate in their descriptions of him. They say that he was a harsh commander who did not show mercy to his fighters and set them difficult challenges from the moment they were recruited and joined the camp of the rebels.¹¹⁷ Yet, he also took care to observe the religious commandments, for example the ones on the separation of the tithes, on the four species for the Succot festival, and on maintaining the Sabbath as a day of rest.¹¹⁸ The crisis of leadership that is connected with the undermining of his status and the loss of faith in him occurred in the final stages of the revolt, when the achievements of the Romans placed in question the success of the revolt and the attainment of its goals. As a result of

116 Israel Ben Shalom, "The Support of the Sages for Bar-Kokhba's Revolt," *Cathedra* 29 (1983): 13–28 [in Hebrew].

117 For a detailed survey of Bar Kokhba's personality as reflected in Jewish literature throughout the ages, see Richard G. Marks, *The Image of Bar Kokhba in Traditional Jewish Literature: False Messiah and National Hero* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994). See chapters 1 and 2.

118 Aharon Oppenheimer, "Bar Kokhba and the Observance of the Mitzvot," *Between Rome and Babylon*, 283–291; idem, "Sabbatheiligung im Bar-Kokhba-Aufstand," *Between Rome and Babylon*, 292–302.

the success of the Romans, there may have been fighters who abandoned the camp of Bar Kokhba and surrendered to the Romans in an attempt to save their own lives or who fled to the caves of the Judaeian Desert. The rest remained faithful to the leader of the revolt until the bitter end in Bethar.

5.2 Eleazar the Priest

Eleazar is mentioned in connection with the Second Revolt in two types of sources, in each of which the name Eleazar is accompanied by a different title:

1. On coins of the revolt the name *Eleazar Hacoen* appears.¹¹⁹



FIGURE 5.2 *Jug with handle; palm branch to right* Inscription: "Eleazar the Priest."

2. In rabbinical sources, Rabbi Eleazar Hamodai, who is mentioned in a number of traditions, is described as the uncle of Bar Kokhba.¹²⁰ It is told that during the siege of Bethar, he was in the city, and that because of the slander of a Cuthean about the relations that Eleazar had with the Romans, Bar Kokhba killed him. The city fell immediately afterwards.¹²¹ There is apparently no connection between Eleazar Hacoen and Eleazar Hamodai, but many scholars

119 Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, nos. 166–167, 173–175 (Kindler, "Coins of the Land of Israel," nos. 89, 91)—Year One; Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, no. 197 (Kindler, *ibid.*, no. 108)—Year Two; Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, no. 213 (Kindler, *ibid.*, no. 140)—year three.

120 *TB*, Gittin 57a; *Lamentations Rabba*, 2, 5.

121 See discussion of this source above, 98–100.

have maintained they are the same person who played a major role in the leadership of the revolt at the side of Bar Kokhba. This assumption in itself raises a number of difficulties, but those difficulties did not prevent a few scholars from using the assumption to claim that the religious-ideological inspiration for the Second Revolt originated from priestly circles.¹²² The inscription *Eleazar Hacoen*, which is found on the coins of the Second Revolt, was an unfailing source of suppositions and calculations by scholars in the research literature. The most prominent claims were that Eleazar Hacoen was one of the minting authorities for the revolt¹²³ and that because the title of *Cohen* was added to his name, his position and authority were religious. This means that the leadership of the revolt was assigned to two authorities: the secular one under Bar Kokhba and the religious one headed by Eleazar Hacoen.¹²⁴ A few scholars went even further and claimed that Eleazar was chosen as the head of the religious leadership because he was a High Priest,¹²⁵ and not just an ordinary priest. The status of High Priest was of a higher rank than that of a prince. Kanael did not only think that Eleazar was a High Priest, but even claimed (on the basis of the coin testimony) that his position as High Priest was superior to that of Bar Kokhba, the Prince. The evidence he purported for this was that when the revolt broke out, Bar Kokhba assumed the title of Prince, while officially Eleazar Hacoen stood at the head of the nation. On the coins of the first year of the revolt, the inscription *Simeon Prince of Israel* appears only on the bronze coins, while the inscription *Eleazar Hacoen* appears on silver coins as well.¹²⁶

Devir also believed that Eleazar was a High Priest, since there are no precedents in ancient sources for the participation of an ordinary priest in political leadership. Also, from the coins and on the basis of his assumption that the inspiration for the revolt originated from the ideology of the Qumran sect, he understood that the status of Eleazar Hacoen was senior to that of a secular leader. The proof he cited was that the coins of the revolt frequently bore only the name of *Simeon* without the title *the Prince of Israel*, while the coins on which the name of Eleazar was found always bore his title *Hacoen* with

122 Goodblatt, "The Title Nasi," 119–132; Ben-Haim Trifon, "Internal Politics," 13–26.

123 See, for example: Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 623. He refers to an additional minting authority "Jerusalem," which means the city and the people of Jerusalem. According to Alon, Jerusalem is parallel to *Hever Hayehudim*, minted on the Hasmonean coins. This claim is unacceptable to me.

124 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 46, 623.

125 Kanael, "Notes on the Dates," 43. Devir, 131–132; Yeivin, 77.

126 Kanael, "Notes on the Dates," 43.

the intention of “emphasizing the value of the priest in the leadership of the state.”¹²⁷ However, the extent to which these assumptions are complicated and difficult can be attested to by the words of Yeivin: “Without the renewal of the sacrificial cult (instead of the Temple) it is difficult to understand why it was necessary for the rebels to appoint a High Priest, yet without such an appointment one cannot understand the minting of coins with the name Eleazar Hachohen specifically during the days of this revolt.”¹²⁸

Yeivin based his assumption that Eleazar was a High Priest on two other baseless suppositions, the conquest of Jerusalem by the rebels and the renewal of the sacrificial cult in the city. In prior discussion, I dealt in detail with these two suppositions, and my conclusion was that there is no evidence for them in the various sources describing the Second Revolt. In view of this, the claims of Yeivin that the appointment of Eleazar Hachohen was necessary for the renewal of the sacrifices cannot withstand criticism. Even if we accept his assumption that Eleazar was a High Priest, he also claimed that in the third year of the revolt Jerusalem was no longer in the hands of the rebels, a claim belied by the name *Eleazar Hachohen* that appears on a coin of this year.¹²⁹

The claim made by Kanael and Devir, on the basis of the coin evidence, that the status of Eleazar was the superior one because he was the High Priest is also unconvincing. In rejecting that claim, Schäfer asked ironically should we also consider the proof of the superior status of Eleazar Hachohen based on the coin in which the name *Eleazar* appears in its full form, while the name of the leader is appeared in the abbreviated type as ‘שמע’?!¹³⁰

On this issue as well, Mildenberg claimed in his comprehensive research on the Eleazar coins, that a rare phenomenon occurred in the coins of the Second Revolt that does not exist among the coins of the ancient world. Usually, the minting authority is indicated on the coin. On the coins of the Second Revolt, the name of Simeon appears on both sides—obverse and reverse—of the coin, while the name of Eleazar always appears on the reverse of it.¹³¹ Does this comment not specifically exemplify the opposite situation from the one that is presented by Kanael and Devir about the status of the leader of the revolt? Mildenberg’s statements contradict those assumptions made by Kanael and

127 Devir, 131–132.

128 Yeivin, 77.

129 For coins with the inscription *Eleazar the Priest* dated to Year Three of the Revolt, see above, 281–282.

130 Schäfer, 100 and note 22.

131 See Leo Mildenberg, “The Eleazar Coins of the Bar Kochba Rebellion,” *Historia Judaica* 11 (1949): 91.

Devir. In his view, the coins of the Second Revolt do not maintain the norms that existed among the coins of the ancient world. However, they and their inscriptions conform to their own norm. He alleges that whoever minted these coins did not specifically wish to stress the name of Eleazar Hachohen, as can be seen from the fact that none of the inscriptions is clear and free of errors. Also, of all the symbols that appear on the coins, there is not one symbol that can be directly associated with or attributed to the name of Eleazar.¹³² It thus appears that the assumption of many scholars that Eleazar was a High Priest is unproven. Nevertheless, the name of Eleazar Hachohen is mentioned on the coins, which indicates the existence of this figure who has to be identified. The problem of his identification has engaged scholars; and nearly every prominent personality of that period who bore the name *Eleazar* has been proposed as this particular Eleazar:

Eleazar ben Azariah was first identified by Hamburger as the Eleazar mentioned on the coins of the revolt.¹³³ But Hamburger's assumption was rejected by Schürer, who believed that Eleazar ben Azariah had played a central leadership role at the beginning of the revolt and was later replaced by Bar Kokhba.¹³⁴ Mildenberg rejected this possibility on the basis of the coin finds that Schürer did not have at the time of his hypothesis, the coins of Year Three, on which the name of Eleazar was mentioned.¹³⁵ The identification was also rejected by Alon, who claimed that Eleazar ben Azariah had died before the Second Revolt and therefore could not have played a major role in the revolt.¹³⁶

Eleazar ben Harsum—According to the tradition in the Jerusalem Talmud, ten thousand towns belonging to him were destroyed during the Second Revolt. On this basis, an attempt was made to identify him as Eleazar Hachohen. But in view of my prior discussion about this tradition, it is clearly preferable to date

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Leo Hamburger, "Die Silber Münzenprägungen während des letzten Aufstandes der Israeliten gegen Rom nach einem in der Nähe von Chebron gemachten Münzfunde klassifiziert," *Zeitschrift für Numismatik* 18 (1892): 304–325.

¹³⁴ See Emil Schürer, *Geschichte des Jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesus Christi*, 1 (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1907, 683. In the English version, Schürer, 445, the editors ignored Schürer's original assumption.

¹³⁵ Mildenberg (above, note 131), 93 and note 36.

¹³⁶ Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 465. R. Eleazar, son of Azariah, took the place of Rabban Gamliel II after his death, and R. Tarfon, who died shortly after the Second Revolt, succeeded him in this position. Alon concludes that R. Eleazar, son of Azaria, died before the Second Revolt.

it to the time of the Great Revolt and to assert that it has no connection at all with the period of the Second Revolt.¹³⁷

Eleazar of Modiin—On the basis of the traditions mentioned earlier, in which the name of Eleazar of Modiin (Hamodai) is referred to in connection with the Second Revolt and its leader, a few scholars have identified him as the Eleazar Hacoheh on the coins, even though there is no indication in the sources that Eleazar of Modiin was a priest. The priestly origin of Eleazar was ascribed to him because of the epithet *Hamodai*, which was interpreted as being the place from where he had come, the town of Modi'in where priests of the Yehoyariv division resided and where the early Hasmoneans had once lived.¹³⁸ Applebaum claimed that the proof for Eleazar Hamodai being a priest was in his name. In his view, most of those bearing this name during the Second Temple period and afterwards were priests.¹³⁹ The identification of Eleazar Hamodai as Eleazar Hacoheh raises many difficulties. First, the family relationship ascribed to Bar Kokhba and Eleazar Hamodai is uncertain. In the Jerusalem Talmud, Eleazar Hamodai is termed as 'חביבך' (*your dear one*) and in Lamentations Rabba as 'חברך' (*your friend*). Both these terms were interpreted by Yeivin as 'דודך' (*your uncle*). He regarded the evidence in the Jerusalem Talmud as trustworthy and claimed that Eleazar Hamodai was the uncle of Bar Kokhba.¹⁴⁰

In the opinion of Kanael, there was evidence from the period before the destruction of the Temple that the position of Prince and the position of High Priest were held by persons with a family relationship.¹⁴¹ But this claim does not withstand criticism. Kanael noted two testimonies to support his words, one of which is from Josephus: "Hereupon they sent for one of the pontifical tribes, which is called Eniachim, and cast lots which of it should be the high priest. By fortune the lot so fell as to demonstrate their iniquity after the plainest manner, for it fell upon one whose name was Phannias, the son of Samuel, of the village Aphtha. He was a man not only unworthy of the high priesthood,

137 For the different tradition related to Elazar, son of Harsum, see above 197, 212.

138 See 1 *Maccabees*, 2:1; *JA* 12: 265.

139 Applebaum, "Results," 230, 391, note 9. Applebaum refers to Menahem Stern, "The Relations between Judea and Rome during the Rule of John Hyrcanus," *Zion* 26 (1961): 21 and note 29 [in Hebrew]. Goodblatt argued against this interpretation, saying that the name *Eleazar* during this period was a very common name. See Goodblatt, "Did the Tannaim support Bar Kokhba," *Cathedra* 29 (1983): 8.

140 Yeivin, 214, note 18.

141 Kanael, "Notes on the Dates," 43 and note 30.

but that did not well know what the high priesthood was, such a mere rustic was he!"¹⁴²

The second one is from the Tosefta: "They said about Phannias of the village Aphtha that he had chanced by lot to be the High Priest and that the treasurers... [of the Temple?] found him quarrying and filled his quarry with gold dinars. Rabbi Haninah ben Gamliel said, he was not a stonecutter, but was related to us by marriage, and they found him plowing."¹⁴³

Kanael learned from these two sources that the High Priest Phannias from the village of Aphtha was related by marriage to the princely family. But this conclusion is too simplistic, since it combines both sources and attributes a degree of reliability to them. Therefore, neither of these testimonies constitute clear-cut proof of Kanael's claims. The method of appointing a high priest by lottery, as described by Josephus, was unusual and unacceptable. Morton Smith, who claimed that the Zealots were farmers living in the villages of Judah, did not consider their actions exceptional, but he regarded this deed as completely suited to the extreme piety of the farmers who chose a villager among themselves to be the High Priest.¹⁴⁴

In contrast to Smith's interpretation of the source in Josephus, Stern claimed that the Zealots were members of the priesthood and that they appointed a High Priest for themselves by lot in order to improve the low status of the high priesthood.¹⁴⁵ Despite the various interpretations of Smith and Stern, neither of them doubted the reliability of the source. But in fact, there is no evidence in this source for the connection between the elected priest and the princely family. Baer, on the other hand, rejected this source and claimed that Josephus lied. He accepted the Talmudic tradition describing this event as the more reliable and preferred source than that by Josephus. In his view, the fact that the tradition appears in Tosefta, Yom Hakippurim, shows that the special appointment was made for the service on that sacred day. The priest who was chosen by lot belonged to the family of Gamliel, and the appointment by lot was in conformity with their view of divine providence.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² *JW*, 4: 155–157.

¹⁴³ *Tosefta*, Yoma, 1, 6.

¹⁴⁴ Morton Smith, "Zealots and Sicarii: Their Origins and Relation," *Harvard Theological Review* 64 (1971): 16–17; idem, "The Troublemakers," *Cambridge History of Judaism*, 111, 501–568.

¹⁴⁵ Menahem Stern, "Zealots," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica Year Book*, 1973 (Jerusalem: 1973): 141.

¹⁴⁶ Yitzhak Baer, "Jerusalem in the Times of the Great Revolt," *Zion* 36 (1971): 153–154 [in Hebrew].

Besides the difficulty involved in understanding the two aforementioned sources, there is no evidence that Shimon ben Gamliel filled the role of Prince (*Nasi*). He had been a senior participant in the government of the Great Revolt but is not mentioned in the sources as 'נשיא' as previously stated. This position had not even existed before the First Revolt,¹⁴⁷ and therefore the evidence that Kanael found in both sources and the inference he made from them about Eleazar Hamodai and Bar Kokhba are completely irrelevant.

In the discussion about the tradition regarding the family relationship between Eleazar Hamodai and Bar Kokhba, Schäfer claimed a literary pattern that repeats itself in several sources that describe a family connection between a rebel and a wise man. As an example, he cited the tradition about Ben Battiah, the son of Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai's sister, who was in charge of the stores; during the revolt, he had burnt the stores of grain.¹⁴⁸ To this, I add the tradition about Abba Sikra, the head of the Jerusalem *biryonim* (ruffians) who was also the son of Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai's sister.¹⁴⁹ From these two examples, it is clear that the legend makers for the Great Revolt had turned two non-historical characters into relatives of Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai.¹⁵⁰

The tradition that Eleazar Hamodai was in Bethar, a tradition discussed at length when I dealt with the participation of the Samaritans in the revolt, is a biased and polemical tradition with the aim of making the Samaritans the main ones to blame for the fall of Bethar and the failure of the Second Revolt. It is not a tradition of any historical value, and one cannot derive from it anything about the part played by Eleazar in the leadership of the revolt.¹⁵¹ Even

147 See above, xxx–xxx.

148 Schäfer, 174. For the tradition about Ben Battiah, see *Lamentations Rabba* 1, 31 (Buber's ed. p. 66): "And there was Ben Battiah son of Rabban Yohanan Ben Zakkai's daughter who was in charge of the stores." For an additional example given by Schäfer of this kind of family relations, see Epiphanius, *De Pond. et Mens.* 14. He preserved a tradition that Aqilas was a kinsman of the Emperor Hadrian. Cf. Renan Baker, "Epiphanius, 'On Weights and Measures' §14: Hadrian's Journey to the East and the Rebuilding of Jerusalem," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 182 (2012): 162–163.

149 *TB*, Gittin, 56a "Abba Sikra the head of the biryoni in Jerusalem was the son of the sister of Rabban Johanan b. Zakkai יוחנן בן זכאי" *אבא סקרא ריש ביריוני דירושלם בר אחתיה דרבן יוחנן בן זכאי*

150 *Ben Battiah* is the name of one of the Israelite Giants, known in the *Mishnah* Kelim, 17:12: "This is the fist of Ben Battiah." = "אגרופו של בן בטיח" See Baer (above, note 21), 154. About the nature of these sources, see Rappaport, "Secondary Literary Sources," in *Judea and Rome*, 120, 357, note 29. He classified these sources as "tales." He commented that only when the name is mentioned by Josephus Flavius is the Talmudic entry brought up in a historical context, but never as an autonomous Talmudic reference.

151 Schäfer, 173–174, and above, 365–368.

though we cannot identify Eleazar Hacoen with a familiar historical figure, I cannot accept the claims of Mildenberg that Eleazar was neither one of the leaders of the revolt nor one of its opponents and that his name and title had only a symbolic significance for those involved in the revolt.¹⁵²

At this point, I would like to return to the discussion about the view that ascribes the religious-ideological inspiration for the Second Revolt to priestly circles. In the opinion of Alon, the priests had a special status and enormous influence among the people, even after the destruction of the Second Temple when their positions were damaged. According to this assumption, he explained the significance of the double appointment on the eve of the Second Revolt, the appointment of Bar Kokhba as Prince and the appointment of Eleazar Hacoen to represent the priestly caste. In Alon's view, the appointments were not made for religious motives, such as the renewal of the sacrificial cult in Jerusalem, but for political reasons.¹⁵³ Philonenko,¹⁵⁴ Ben Hayim, and Goodblatt, claimed that the inspiration for the Second Revolt originated from the priestly caste, and the initiative for revolt came from them. This assumption rests on the fact that after the death of Rabban Gamliel II, the institution of Nasi was annulled, and the vacuum that was created in Jewish leadership led to the strengthened power of sages of priestly stock. These sages found Bar Kokhba a suitable partner for the realization of hopes and aspirations like the rehabilitation of Jerusalem, the rebuilding of the Temple, and the renewal of its cultic rites.¹⁵⁵ Although priests were also noted previously as being among the supporters of the revolt, and from numismatic evidence it seems that a priest participated in its leadership, I cannot agree with the assumption that the inspiration for the revolt originated specifically from priestly circles, especially if we examine the testimonies on which the scholars relied in their attempts to support that view.

1. The participation of a priest in the leadership of the revolt can only serve as proof that priests were also among the participants of the revolt. Since it is not possible to identify Eleazar Hacoen as any well-known historical figure, one cannot infer from the fact of his participation in the leadership of the revolt anything more than what I have already stated. There is no information about

152 Mildenberg (above, note 131), 99; Schäfer, 99, note 120. He suggested that the title "הכהן" should be interpreted not as a title but as a name.

153 Yeivin, 79, citing Alon's oral interpretation.

154 M. M. Philonenko, "Observations sur des monnaies Juifs de la seconde revolté (132–135)," *Comptes-Rendus de L'Academie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres* (1974): 183–189.

155 Ben Hayim-Trifon and Goodblatt (above, note 122).

the ideology that guided him and his followers, even if we adopt the assumption of Applebaum about the identification of Eleazar Hacoen as Eleazar Hamodai, from whom we have a clear declaration about the aims of the revolt:

“R. Eleazar of Modiin said keeping the Sabbath would result in God’s giving Israel six good measures (מידות) The Land, The world to come, The New world, The Kingdom of David, The priesthood, and the Levites.”¹⁵⁶ I cannot regard this declaration as the inspiration for the revolt that supposedly came from among the priestly circles.¹⁵⁷

2. There is no doubt that after the destruction of the Second Temple, hopes for the rebuilding of the Temple and renewal of its cultic rites were cherished not only among the priestly caste but also in many sectors of the population in Judaea. For example, one of the regulations set down by Rabban Gamliel II was that every person in Israel should pray for the Temple and for the Land of Israel.¹⁵⁸ Yet, in spite of these hopes and expectations for the restoration of the Temple and its cultic rites, there is no certain evidence from the sources that describe the Second Revolt that the rebels tried to conquer Jerusalem, to rebuild the Temple, or to renew the sacrificial rites. Those who rejected the claim accepted by scholars regarding the conquest of the city by the rebels did so on the basis of military and political considerations. Such considerations included the impossibility of conquering the city held by the Tenth Legion Fretensis stationed in it and protecting it and the reality that the conquest of the city from the Romans would have led to a harsh Roman response. A siege would have been imposed on the city that would have become a death trap for the besieged, as had occurred in the First Revolt.¹⁵⁹ These testimonies and assumptions are contrary to the view that the revolt was a result of priestly inspiration. If it were, military considerations would not have impeded the fighters who were bent on conquering Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple and renew its sacrificial cult.

3. The prior discussion of the title of Nasi does not allow for the acceptance of the assumption that the doctrine of princely status embodied in the figure

156 *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Ishmael*, Vayassa, 5, 169. אלעזר המודעי אומר אם תזכו לשמור את השבת. עתיד הקב"ה ליתן לכם שש מדות טובות: ארץ ישראל ועולם הבא ועולם חדש ומלכות בית דוד (וכהונה ולוייה); Applebaum, “Background,” 218.

157 On the source see Elaine Phillips, “They are Loved on Account of the Patriarchs”, Zekhut Avot and the Covenant of Abraham,” in *Perspectives on our Father Abraham, Essays in Honor of Marvin R. Wilson*, ed. Steven A. Hunt (Grand Rapids, Mich.: B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2010): 206.

158 Applebaum, “Background,” 220.

159 See above, 214–218.

of Bar Kokhba was a priestly doctrine, as in the versions found in Ezekiel and in the Qumran sect.¹⁶⁰

4. Two other points were used by Goodblatt as proof of the priestly inspiration for the revolt:

a. In his view the severe anti-Christian policy of Bar Kokhba resembled that of the priestly circles towards the Christians. However, this evidence is not convincing. The persecution of the Christians during the Second Revolt is documented only in Christian sources with the aim of presenting Bar Kokhba as a false Messiah. These sources portray Bar Kokhba as a persecutor of the believers in Jesus the Messiah because they did not want to abjure their faith in Jesus and recognize Bar Kokhba as the Messiah. Previously, I established that it was the Christians who had perhaps initiated their separation from Judaism. Moreover, Goodblatt himself claimed that “there is no basis for regarding the Sages of Yavne as having caused the separation from Christianity.” If so, then where is the precedent, and where was the persecution of the Christians before the Second Revolt?¹⁶¹

b. The motif of two trumpets on the coins of the revolt seems, in the opinion of Goodblatt, to indicate priestly inspiration. The designs that appear on the coins of the revolt do indeed have religious significance, especially those of the Temple and of items related to Temple worship, such as the musical instruments (e.g., the lyre, the harp, and the trumpet) and vessels.¹⁶² But since the design of the two trumpets did not appear on the coins of Year One but only on the coins of Year Two *for the Freedom of Israel*, and on the coins of Year Three with the inscription *For the Liberation of Jerusalem*,¹⁶³ this design should not be used as testimony for priestly inspiration.

As I have argued, there is no need to search for any religious-ideological inspiration for the Second Revolt within any specific sector of the Jewish population in Palestine because at the center of this revolt stood a charismatic figure with the ability to gather around him many faithful adherents from various sectors of the population who apparently gave him unrestricted support. I have no intention, therefore, of trying to locate those circles that constituted the inspiration for the revolt or that were an influential factor in the choice of the leader, his title, and the way in which he acted. The leader of the revolt

¹⁶⁰ Philonenko (above, note 154), 187.

¹⁶¹ Goodblatt, “Jews of Eretz Israel,” 181.

¹⁶² Rappaport, “Coins,” in *Judea and Rome*, 135.

¹⁶³ Meshorer, *Jewish Coins*, nos. 182, 203 (Kindler, *Coins of the Land of Israel*, nos. 182, 203). Coins of Year Two. Meshorer, no. 208 (Kindler, nos. 121, 132). Coins of Year Three.

shared the leadership of the revolt with others as with Eleazar Hachohen, who was—as the coins testify—an active participant in the Second Revolt. I do not believe that anyone should search for any priestly inspiration for the revolt or for any testimony for the support of the sages, from which the revolt drew its inspiration, as some scholars tried to do in the words of Rabbi Akiba, one of the sages who lived during that period.¹⁶⁴

5.3 Rabbi Akiba as the Spiritual Leader of the Revolt

The name of Rabbi Akiba is mentioned in direct relation to the Second Revolt in only one source: “R. Shimeon bar Yohai taught: Akiba my teacher would expound ‘a star shall step forth from Jacob’ (*Numbers* 24:17). R. Akiba when he saw Bar Koziva would say, this is the King Messiah.”¹⁶⁵ Many scholars have claimed that this sole source—in which Rabbi Akiba apparently declared the leader of the revolt, Bar Kokhba, to be the King Messiah—is proof of the unrestrained support of Rabbi Akiba for the leader of the revolt and for the revolt itself.¹⁶⁶ Moreover, Rabbi Akiba, who was considered the spiritual leader of the

164 See Sigalit Ben Zion, *A Road Map to Heavens: An Anthropological Study of Hegemony Among Priests Sages and Laymen* (Brighton Mass.: Academic Studies Press 2009), 45–46. She rejects Goodblatt’s interpretation as *mere conjectures*.

165 *TJ* Tannit, 4: 68d. See also *Lamentations Rabba* 2:2: “אמר דין הוא מלכא תני ר' שמעון בר יוחי עקיבא רבי היה דורש דרך כוכב מעקב, ר' עקיבא כד הוה חמי בר כוזבה הוה משיחא.”

166 For a detailed bibliography on the topic, see Schäfer, “Aqiva,” 127, note 1; Aleksanderov, “Aqiba,” 65–66, notes 3 and 6; 422, note 3. For later research, see Noah Hacham, “Rabban Simeon Son of Gamliel,” *Tarbiz* 74 (2005): 547–548, notes 2–4 [in Hebrew]. Ben-Zion Rosenfeld, “The Sages during the Bar Kokhba Period, and their Relation to the Revolt according to Tannaitic Literature,” in *Path of Peace: Studies in Honor of Israel Friedman Ben-Shalom*, eds. Dov Gera, Miriam Ben Zeev (Beersheba: Ben Gurion University Press, 2005): 319–359 (Hebrew); Salomo A. Birnbaum, “Bar Kosba (Kokhba) and Akiba,” in *Ein Leben für die Wissenschaft: wissenschaftliche Aufsätze aus sechs Jahrzehnten*, eds. E. Timm, et al. = A Lifetime of Achievement; Six Decades of Scholarly Articles, von Salomo/Solomon A. Birnbaum, 1: *Linguistik*; 11: *Paläographie* (Boston, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2011): 241–252 [=First published in *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 86 (1954): 23–32]; Peter Schäfer, “Hadrian’s Policy in Judaea and the Bar Kokhba Revolt: A Reassessment,” in *A Tribute to Géza Vermès; Essays on Jewish and Christian Literature and History*, eds. Philip R. Davies, Richard T. White (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990): 290–292; idem, “Bar Kokhba and the Rabbis,” 2–7.

revolt,¹⁶⁷ became a member of the threefold rebel leadership that also included Bar Kokhba and Eleazar the Priest. This interpretation was even broadened by those who claimed that the sages constituted the national leadership after the destruction of the Temple, gave wide support to the revolt, identified with its aims and its leader, and also fought alongside Bar Kokhba. Oppenheimer, for example, argued that “Without this support Bar Kokhba could not have attained his high status.”¹⁶⁸

The assumption regarding the part played by the sages in the Second Revolt is based on a single source that was given in the name of one of Rabbi Akiba’s disciples, Rabbi Shimeon bar Yohai. Perhaps from this source one may infer that Bar Kokhba was declared as the King Messiah, yet this can only be done if one overlooks the historical reliability of the source,¹⁶⁹ and it does not tell us about the part that Rabbi Akiba played in the revolt. Most scholars have been forced to find indirect twelfth-century interpretation by Maimonides. During his discussion of the laws concerning a king, he also dealt with the laws relating to the King Messiah. In his view, the King Messiah did not have to perform miracles or works of wonder in order to prove his true standing. As evidence, he cites the relationship of Rabbi Akiba to Bar Kokhba: “R. Akiva, was a great sage, a teacher of the Mishnah, yet was also the armor-bearer [נושא כלי] of Ben Kozba. He affirmed that the latter was the King Messiah. He and all the wise men of his generation shared this belief until Ben Kozba was slain in (his) iniquity, when it became known that he was not the Messiah.”¹⁷⁰

167 See Devir, 114–119, 175. According to him, R. Akiva was the one who advanced the messianic hopes around Bar Kozebah, and he sanctioned it publicly. We had seen his part among the messianic “triumvir” of the desert community in the figure of the Prophet beside the Messiahs of Aharon and Israel. See Ben Shalom, “The Support of the Sages for the Bar Kokhba’s Revolt,” *Cathedra* 29 (1983): 13–28; idem, “Events and Ideology of the Yavneh Period as Indirect Cause of the Bar Kokhva Revolt,” in *The Bar Kokhva Revolt: New Approach*, 1–12.

168 Oppenheimer, “Bar Kokhba Revolt,” 57; Safrai, above, note 1, 29.

169 See above, 137–140.

170 Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws concerning Kings, 11:3 for the translation, see *Maimonides Reader*, edited with introduction and notes, by Isadore Twersky (New York: Behrman House, 1972), 223. See also “Let it not enter your mind that the King Messiah needs to work signs and wonders, and to bring novel things into the world, and to revive the dead and similar such things. Yet the sages had not asked from him to either sign or wonder.” For reviews about Bar Kokhba and R. Akiba in medieval literature, see Richard G. Marks, *Images of Bar Kokhba*, 81–82; Ram Ben Shalom, *Facing Christian Culture: Historical Consciousness and Images of the Past Among the Jews of Spain* (Jerusalem: Ben Zvi Institute for Research of the Israelite Communities in the East, 2006), chapter 5 (Hebrew).

And in another source concerning the laws for the fast of the Ninth of Av, Maimonides refers to the leader of the revolt, without mentioning his name, as a great king and the Messianic king: "A great city named Bettar was captured—It contained thousands and myriads of Israelites and had a great king whom all Israel, including the greatest scholars thought to be the Messianic king. But he fell into the hands of the Romans who slew them all. A calamity was great as that of the destruction of the Temple."¹⁷¹

In order to strengthen the messianic characterization given by Maimonides to Bar Kokhba, a number of scholars tried to narrow the gap of a thousand years between his commentary and the time of the revolt. They claimed the existence of an ancient source from which Maimonides must have derived this identification of Bar Kokhba as the King Messiah.¹⁷² By contrast, in his discussion of Maimonides' testimony that Rabbi Akiba was Bar Kokhba's armor-bearer, Efron asserted that Maimonides had no need for an ancient source on which to base his theory of Akiba's role in the revolt. In his view, Maimonides was expressing "in colorful language, the service and assistance given by Rabbi Akiba to the leader of the revolt."¹⁷³ This conclusion was opposed by Goodblatt, who claimed that not all those who recognized the messianic nature of Bar Kokhba were among the leaders of the revolt!¹⁷⁴ In the past, Alexandrov and Schäfer conducted comprehensive summaries of the sources that describe the role played by Rabbi Akiba and the sages in the Second Revolt and of the studies that dealt with these sources.¹⁷⁵ I will review, besides Rabbi Akiba's declaration of Bar Kokhba as the Messiah, additional sources and studies that have examined the connections in various spheres between the sages in general and Rabbi Akiba in particular and the events of the Second Revolt.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷¹ Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Sefer Zemanim, Fast Days, 5:3. For the translation, see Twersky, 116.

¹⁷² Yehuda L. Maimon, "Threefold Love," *Sinai* 43 (1958): 54 [in Hebrew]. See also Mordechai Sabato, *Yemenite Manuscript of Tractate Sanhedrin and its Place in the Text Tradition* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 1998), 213 [in Hebrew]. He cites David Rosenthal, who preferred the sayings of Maimonides to the Yemenite Manuscript.

¹⁷³ Efron, "Bar Kokhba War," 47–48, and note 48. See Sabato, previous note, for his rejection of Efron's interpretation.

¹⁷⁴ Goodblatt, "Nasi," 126.

¹⁷⁵ Alexandrov and Schäfer (above, note 166).

¹⁷⁶ For a detailed summary of the sources and the research about the participation of R. Akiba and the Sages in the Second Revolt see Aleksandrov (above, note 167), 422–436; Schäfer, "Rabbi Aqiva," 113–130; idem, "Bar Kokhba and the Rabbis," 1–7.

Rabbi Akiba as the Spiritual Leader of the Revolt

1. The Pupils of Rabbi Akiba:

While dealing with the exposition of Rabbi Joshua and Rabbi Akiba on the verse in Ecclesiastes 11:6 (“Sow your seed in the morning, and at evening let your hands not be idle”), this source noted that Rabbi Akiba had twenty-four thousand disciples, and all of them died within a single time period. The source specifies the reason for their death as a lack of respect for each other. It adds, in the name of Rabbi Hiyya bar Abin, that all of them died a cruel death, and Rabbi Nahman interprets cruel death as *ascara* (diphtheria).

For it was taught: Rabbi Yehoshua said, If a man married in his youth, he should marry again in his old age; if he had children in his youth, he should also have children in his old age; for it is said, ‘In the morning sow thy seed and in the evening withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not which shall prosper, whether this or that, or whether they shall both be alike good.’ Rabbi Akiva said: If a man studied Torah in his youth, he should also study it in his old age; if he had disciples in his youth, he should also have disciples in his old age. For it is said, ‘In the morning sow your seed.’ (Ecclesiastes 11:6)

It was said that Rabbi Akiva had twelve thousand pairs of disciples, from Gabbatha to Antipatris; and all of them died at the same time because they did not treat each other with respect. The world remained desolate until Rabbi Akiva came to Masters in the South and taught the Torah to them. These were Rabbi Meir, Rabbi Yehudah, Rabbi Jose, Rabbi Shimon and Rabbi Elazar ben Shamua; and it was they who revived the Torah at that time. A tanna taught: All of them died between Passover and Pentecost. R. Hama ben Abba or, it might be said, Rabbi Hiyya b. Avin said: All of them died a cruel death. What was it? Rav Nahman replied: Croup Diphtheria (אסכרה).¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁷ TB Yevamot, 62:b; See parallel traditions: *Genesis Rabba* 61:3 (Theodor-Albeck Edition, 660): “Rabbi Akiva had **twelve thousand pairs of disciples**, from Gevat to Antipatris and **all of them died at the same time**. Why? Because their eyes were narrow with each other. In the end, he [Rabbi Akiva] taught and raised seven disciples: Rabbi Meir, Rabbi Yehudah, Rabbi Yose, Rabbi Shimon, Rabbi Elazar ben Shamua, Rabbi Yohanan the shoemaker, and Rabbi Eliezer ben Ya'kov. Others say: Rabbi Yehudah, Rabbi Nehemia, Rabbi Meir, Rabbi Yose, Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai, Rabbi Hanania ben Hakhinai and Rabbi Yohanan the shoemaker. He [Rabbi Akiva] said to them: My first sons died only because their eyes were narrow with each other in Torah. Be careful not to do as they did. They stood and filled all of the land of Israel with Torah.” See also *Ecclesiastes Rabba*, 11:10; *Tanhuma*, 6; *Tanhuma*

Most of the scholars who discussed this source with regard to the huge number of disciples, claimed that the reference was not really to disciples but to soldiers who participated in the Second Revolt and who had accepted the political beliefs of Rabbi Akiba.¹⁷⁸ Evidence for this view was found in the epistle of Rab Sherira Gaon, head of the Torah Academy of Pumbeditha in the tenth century CE: "Rabbi Akiba raised up many disciples, but there was a destruction (שמדא) upon the disciples of Rabbi Akiba."¹⁷⁹ The word 'שמד' is associated with the punitive measures of Hadrian after the suppression of the revolt. The epistle associates this word with the period of the Second Revolt and those who were martyred by the Romans. The sources on the subject of the deaths of Rabbi Akiba's disciples have been given detailed literary analyses. Haim Licht, in a literary kind of study that focused on sources dealing with the fate of the disciples of Rabbi Akiba, reviewed some of the contemporary research on this issue that adjudged the disciples did not die of a plague but in the course of events associated with the Second Revolt. He himself adopted this view and claimed that the connection between the death of the disciples and the events of the Second Revolt was plausible. He added that the attempt to link their failure and death with ethical reasons was intended to explain why these disciples had failed as rebels!¹⁸⁰

Aharon Amit, after a careful study of various parallel versions of the story about the death of Rabbi Akiba's disciples, reconstructed the literary history of the various states in the development of the tradition about this subject, as summarized in the source of the *Babylonian Talmud* (Yevamot 62:2). He arrived at a number of conclusions contrary to those of Licht, the main one being that the story had no historical value, since its main aim was to clarify why Rabbi Akiba expounded the verse in Ecclesiastes. The editors of the story were not concerned with the possible historical significance of their story, and therefore

Buber, *Hayyei Sarah* 8, 122–123; see also *Avot de Rabbi Natan*, version A 3: 6 S. Schechter ed., 16; שמדא, אל שניהם כאחת טובים. שנאמר, ר' עקיבא אומר, למדת תורה בילדותך (למוד תורה), אל שניהם כאחת טובים. שנאמר, איני למד תורה בזקנותי. כי אינך יודע איזה יכשר, אם שניהם יתקיימו בידך בזקנותך או תאמר

178 Oppenheimer, "Bar Kokhba Revolt," 57–58; Efron, "Bar Kokhba War," 58; Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 631–632; Alexandrov, 422–433.

179 *Epistle of Sherira Gaon* (ed. Lewin) 13:

"והעמיד ר' עקיבא תלמידים הרבה והוה שמדא על התלמידים של ר' עקיבא."

See Oppenheimer, 58, note 50, in which he discusses Alon's interpretation. Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 631.

180 Hayim Licht, "On the Deaths of Rabbi Akiba's Disciples," *Tura* 1 (1989): 119–134 [in Hebrew].

one cannot learn from it about the plague or the war in which the disciples of Rabbi Akiba died during the second century CE.¹⁸¹

Goodblatt also rejected the historical reliability of the sources under discussion, basing his contention mainly on two reasons: The first concerns the evidence brought from the epistle of Rav Sherira Gaon. In Goodblatt's view, one cannot rely on its reference to the word *השמד* because of its late date and the fact that in the preferred versions of the epistle, the word *השמד* is not mentioned at all. The second reason concerns chronology. When did the event occur? If the annihilation of the disciples of Rabbi Akiba occurred during the revolt, when could he have managed to ordain seven new disciples during the time he was a prisoner in jail? Since Goodblatt detached these sources from the Second Revolt, he believed that these were indeed real disciples, and their numbers are part of the legendary motif that also appears in other stories about Bar Kokhba.¹⁸²

2. The Travels of Rabbi Akiba

Rabbinical sources give extensive descriptions of the travels of Rabbi Akiba. Some of them do not mention the destinations of these travels but only describe the voyage of Rabbi Akiba on the ship alone or with sages.¹⁸³ Other sources note the places visited by Rabbi Akiba: In Italy: Rome, Puteoli, and Brindisi;¹⁸⁴ in the Parthian empire: Nehardea¹⁸⁵ and the Ginzak of Media; in the coastal cities of Phoenicia; in the Jewish centers of Antioch and Zofrin,¹⁸⁶ and

181 Aharon Amit, "The Death of Rabbi Akiva's Disciples: A Literary History," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 56 (2005): 265–284.

182 Goodblatt, "Nasi," 124–125, notes 47–49.

183 Catherine Hezser, *The Social Structure of the Rabbinic Movement in Roman Palestine*, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), devoted a chapter to the Rabbi's mobility. For a general study of the travels of the sages, see idem, *Jewish Travel in Antiquity* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011).

184 On the travels to Rome, see Shmuel Safrai, "The Visits of the Javneh Sages in Rome," in *A Memorial Volume for Shelomoh Umberto Nakhon: A Research Collection on the History of the Jews of Italy*, eds. Reuven Bonfil et al. (Jerusalem: Shelomoh Me'ir, Refa'el Kāṭṭoni Institutes, 1978), 151–167 (= in Safrai, *In the Time of the Temple and the Mishnah: Studies in the History of Israel*, Jerusalem 1994); David Noy, *Foreigners at Rome: Citizens and Strangers*, (London: Duckworth with the Classical Press of Wales, 2000), 85–127; 255–267. Idem, "Rabbi Aqibah Comes to Rome: A Jewish Pilgrimage in Reverse?" in *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman & Early Christian Antiquity Seeing Gods*, eds. Jas Elsner, Ian Rutherford (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005): 373–385.

185 *Mishna Yevamot* 16:7.

186 See *Tosefta Megilla* 2:5; Zephyrion which is Cylicia; *Tosefta Bava Qamma* X:17, *TB Bava Qamma* 113a; *Sifre, Numbers* IV (Horowitz ed.) 7; *Sifre Zuta*, 232; *TJ, Avoda Zara* 2:4, 41.

in Arabia,¹⁸⁷ Gaul, and Africa.¹⁸⁸ Various scholars have treated these sources of travel descriptions as reliable,¹⁸⁹ and attributed political purposes to the journeys of Rabbi Akiba, mainly with the aim of raising funds and recruiting fighters among the Jews of the Diaspora for participation in the Second Revolt.¹⁹⁰ In view of the assumption, that Akiba's travels were driven by political reasons, these scholars claimed that Rabbi Akiba was not only the spiritual leader of the revolt, but was also one of its initiators and organizers. A wealth of sources dealing with this issue exists, and I will discuss a few in detail in order to exemplify the extent to which this assumption is unfounded:

And do not be astonished at Rabbi Zadok, for lo, there was (the case of) Rabbi Akiba, greater than he. When he went to Rome, he was slandered before a certain hegemon. He sent two beautiful women to him. They were bathed and anointed and outfitted like brides. And all night they kept thrusting themselves at him, this one saying: Turn to me, and that one saying turn to me. But he sat there in disgust and would not turn to them. In the morning they went off and complained to the hegemon and said to him: We would rather die than be given to this man. The hegemon sent for him and asked: Why didst thou not do with these women as men generally do with women? Are they not beautiful? Are they not human beings like thyself? Did not He who created thee create them? What could I do, Rabbi Akiba answered, I was overcome by their breath because of the forbidden meats they ate.¹⁹¹

Herr, who claimed the historical reliability of this source, assumed that Rabbi Akiba was in Rome on an official political mission and that he therefore was

187 *TB*, Rosh Hashana.

188 *TB*, Rosh Hashana, 26a. For studies of the travels, see Aleksandrov, 425–428; Schäfer, “Aqiva,” 114–117. Kolitz, 154–157.

189 Finkelstein, 136.

190 Schäfer, “Akiva,” 114.

191 *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan*, trans. from the Hebrew by Judah Goldin, version A, chapter 16, 84:

“ואל תתמה על רבי צדוק, שהרי רבי עקיבא גדול ממנו. כשהלך לרומי אוכילו קורצא אצל הגמון עליו כל הלילה. אחד ושיגר לו שתי נשים יפות רחצום וסכום וקישטום ככלות חתנים. והיו מתנפלות זאת אומרת: חזור אצלי וזאת אומרת: חזור אצלי. והיה יושב ביניהם ומרקק ולא פנה אליהן. לשחרית הלכו להן והקבילו על פני ההגמון ואמרו לו: שווה לנו המוות משתתנינו לאיש הזה. שלח וקרא לו. אמר לו: ומפני מה לא עשית עם הנשים הללו כדרך שבני-אדם עושים לנשים? לא יפות זמה? לא בנות אדם כמותך הן? מי שברא אותך לא ברא אותך? אמר לו: מה אעשה, ריחן בא עלי מבשר נבלות וטרפות ושרצים”

offered beautiful freeborn women by the hegemon.¹⁹² Before this tradition about Rabbi Akiba's visit to Rome, a similar tradition appeared about Rabbi Zadok, who was a prisoner in Rome:

And do not be astonished at Joseph the righteous, for lo, there was (the case of) Rabbi Zadok, the leader of his generation. When he was taken captive to Rome, a certain matron acquired him and sent a beautiful maidservant to him. As soon as he saw her, he turned his eyes to the wall so as not to look upon her. And all night he sat studying. In the morning the maidservant went and complained to her mistress: I would rather die she cried than be given to this man. The mistress sent for him and asked him: Why didst thou not do with this woman as men generally do? Now what could I do, he pleaded; I am of a family of High Priests, I come from a distinguished family. I thought: If I come to her I shall bring bastards into Israel.¹⁹³

Herr thought that both sources are reliable evidence for that period: "Typical of the mentality of that period is the fact that the response of Rabbi Zadok found favor with the matron who then released him with 'great honor,' while the response of Rabbi Akiba must surely have piled amazement upon amazement."¹⁹⁴ Schäfer rejected Herr's central claim, accusing Herr of completely ignoring the fact that what was being examined is a story that repeats itself several times and is related to the way the sages resisted temptations, a strategy that aroused the suspicions and incomprehension of the gentiles. Schäfer further contended that because the sources present a literary motif, these stories should not be given any historical value.¹⁹⁵

192 Moshe D. Herr, "The Historical Meaning of the Dialogues between the Sages and Important Personages of Rome," *Proceedings of the World Congress of Jewish Studies* 4 (1969): 279–280 [in Hebrew]; idem, "The Historical Significance of the Dialogues between Sages and Roman Dignitaries," *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 22 (1971): 123–150.

193 *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan*, version A, chapter 16, 84:
 "שהרי ר' צדוק היה גדול הדור כשנשבה לרומי נטלתו מטרונתא אחת ושגרה לו שפחה אחת יפה כיוון שראה אותה נתן עיניו בכותל שלא יראנה והיה יושב ושונה כל הלילה. לשחרית הלכה והקבילה אצל גבירתה אמרה לה: שווה לי המוות משתתני לאיש זה. שלחה וקראה לו ואמרה לו: מפני מה לא עשית עם אשה זאת כדרך שיעשו בני אדם. אמר לה: ומה אעשה מכחונה גדולה אני ממשפחה גדולה אני—אמרתי שמא אבא עליה והרביתי ממזרים בישראל, כיוון ששמעה דבריו ציוותה עליו ופטרתו בכבוד גדול."

194 Herr (above, note 192), 280.

195 Schäfer, "Akiva," 115–116, 128, note 15. On the parallel stories, see Shamma Friedman, "A Good Story Deserves Retelling: The Unfolding of the Akiva Legend," *Jewish Studies; an Internet Journal* 3 (2004): 55–93.

Applebaum also discussed the aforementioned source, but he included it specifically among the results of the revolt. According to him, the story is not merely a legend but is evidence of the possibility that the Roman authorities made use of sexual means in order to seduce leaders into denying their faith.¹⁹⁶ My prior discussion of one of the sources that was interpreted as evidence of the travels of Rabbi Akiba must guide us in relation to the other sources that describe his travels and those of other sages. None of these traditions contains any kind of evidence that the journeys were political and that their aim was to recruit men and money among the Jews of the Diaspora for the Second Revolt.¹⁹⁷ If these journeys did indeed occur, they were involved with halachic matters, such as determining the yearly calendar dates and intercalations, or with the question of the autonomy of various communities. And perhaps some of them were meant, as Alexandrov suggested, for missionary purposes, to disseminate Judaism among the gentile population.¹⁹⁸ In this regard, it is worth noting that it would be unreasonable to suppose Diaspora Jewry, after the failure of the revolt of 115–117 CE, would be capable of participation in another revolt that had broken out so soon after such devastating defeat. Catherine Hezser rejected the historical reliability of the sources and of the encounters between the sages and the Roman authorities. In her view, the aim of the stories about visits to Rome was to strengthen the status of the sages, who appear in them going into the very center of the regime where they encountered those who held power in the city.¹⁹⁹

David Noy, in his article on the visit of Rabbi Akiba to Rome, rejected the views of Hezser. In his opinion, from the description of the visits by the sages, one cannot learn that their personal status was enhanced by going to Rome, nor do they indicate a strengthening of their prestige by such visits. No political purposes associated with the Roman authorities can be ascribed to them. The most that can be said is that they met the leaders of the local community. Noy suggested a different interpretation of the reasons for the visits of sages to Rome in general and of Rabbi Akiba in particular. His view was that after the destruction of the Second Temple, the vessels of the Temple were transferred to Rome, and in fact the city had become a pilgrimage site or, as he defined this, "A Jewish Pilgrimage in Reverse."²⁰⁰

196 Applebaum, "Results," 259.

197 See Schäfer, "Akiva," 117; Alexandrov, 68–69; Safrai (above, note 1), 30.

198 Alexandrov, previous note.

199 Hezser, Catherine, *The Social Structure of the Rabbinic Movement in Roman Palestine* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 170.

200 Noy (above, note 184), 373–385.

Hezser, whose book concerns the travels of Jews in the ancient world, devoted a chapter to the travels in the Jewish narrative tradition in ancient times, titled “Travel in the Ancient Jewish Narrative Tradition.” In this chapter, she included a section about “Journeys to Rome,” in which she once again discussed the visits of the sages and Rabbi Akiba in Rome. She rejected (with much cynicism) the suggestion of Noy, which in her view, is exaggerated and ignored the realities of that period. According to her, the sources never mentioned sightseeing trips, substitute pilgrimages to Rome, or especially that the Rabbis after 70 CE had any interest in the paraphernalia of the Temple cult. Hezser stressed that the sources make no mention at all of the reasons for the visits to Rome and alleged that apparently the main reason for them, despite the dangers involved, was business matters.²⁰¹ In view of this, one should not consider the traditions that describe the travels of Rabbi Akiba as evidence of his leadership of the Second Revolt and his participation in it.

3. The Arrest and Death of Rabbi Akiba

Herr noted that during the revolt, Rabbi Akiba was arrested alone, and that he was the only one who was executed near the end of the revolt, from which Herr concluded that Akiba’s arrest and execution were connected with his participation in the revolt. On the other hand, the sages who were arrested and executed were punished for transgressing the decrees, which means that they did not participate in the revolt.²⁰² But an examination of the sources regarding the arrest and execution of Rabbi Akiba, in accordance with Herr’s conclusions, illuminates a number of difficulties:

First, these sources raise chronological difficulties: “When the news that Rabbi Akiba had been executed in Caesarea reached Rabbi Judah ben Baba and Rabbi Haninah ben Teradion, . . . from then onwards there was no place in the Land of Israel where the slain were not cast upon it.”²⁰³ According to this source, the execution of Rabbi Akiba in Caesarea was the signal for the outbreak of the revolt, and therefore it was before the year 132 CE, the year in which the revolt broke out.²⁰⁴ Herr rejected this interpretation and alleged that the event occurred at the end of 134 CE,²⁰⁵ to make it consistent with his other assumptions.

²⁰¹ Hezser, 2011, XXX.

²⁰² Moshe D. Herr, “Persecutions and Martyrdom in Hadrian’s Days,” *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 23 (1972): 85–125.

²⁰³ *Minor Tractates*, Semahot, 8:9 (ed. Higger, 154–155).

²⁰⁴ Schäfer, “Akiva,” 124.

²⁰⁵ Herr, “The Participation of the Galilee,” 69.

"Rabbi Shimon said: When R. Akiba was imprisoned in jail, he intercalated the year for three consecutive years. . . ."²⁰⁶ This source served Herr as testimony for the date of the arrest. Since Rabbi Akiba remained in prison for three years, his assumption was that he was imprisoned in 131/132 CE and was executed before the suppression of the revolt.²⁰⁷ Schäfer did not accept the claims of Herr; in his view, the source does not testify that he intercalated the year for three years in succession. Also, the source is not historical evidence for the arrest of Rabbi Akiba but merely a literary template on the subject of Rabbi Akiba's arrest.²⁰⁸

However, in addition to the chronological difficulties, the question arises as to why Rabbi Akiba was arrested at all? Most scholars²⁰⁹ ascribed the reason for his arrest to the tradition in Tractate Berakhot of the Babylonian Talmud:

Our Rabbis taught: Once the wicked Government issued a decree forbidding the Jews to study and practise the Torah. Pappus b. Judah came and found R. Akiba publicly bringing gatherings together and occupying himself with the Torah. He said to him: Akiba, are you not afraid of the Government? He replied: I will explain to you with a parable. A fox was once walking alongside of a river, and he saw fishes going in swarms from one place to another. He said to them: From what are you fleeing? They replied: From the nets cast for us by men. He said to them: Would you like to come up on to the dry land so that you and I can live together in the way that my ancestors lived with your ancestors? They replied: Art thou the one that they call the cleverest of animals? Thou art not clever but foolish. If we are afraid in the element in which we live, how much more in the element in which we would die! So it is with us. If such is our condition when we sit and study the Torah, of which it is written, For that is thy life and the length of thy days, if we go and neglect it how much worse off we shall be! It is related that soon afterwards R. Akiba was arrested and thrown into prison, and Pappus b. Judah was also arrested and imprisoned next to him.²¹⁰

206 *TJ*, Sanhedrin, 82:8.

207 Herr, "Persecution and Martyrdom," 113–116.

208 Schäfer, "Akiva," 121–122.

209 Schäfer, "Akiva," 130, note 52, including a list of scholars.

210 *TB*, Berakot 61b:

"תנו רבנן פעם אחת גזרה מלכות הרשעה שלא יעסקו ישראל בתורה בא פפוס בן יהודה ומצאו לרבי עקיבא שהיה מקהיל קהלות ברבים ועוסק בתורה אמר ליה עקיבא אי אתה מתירא מפני מלכות אמר לו אמשול לך משל למה הדבר דומה לשועל שהיה מהלך על גב הנהר וראה

Herr rejected these sources as providing the reason for the arrest of Rabbi Akiba, since in his view, the Babylonian Talmud tradition is later than the third century CE.²¹¹ There is no doubt that he rejected it because it stands in contradiction to the chronology he had determined in relation to the arrest and execution of Rabbi Akiba.²¹² Yet even without this objection, the source raises difficulties: according to it, Rabbi Akiba was arrested because he transgressed the imperial decrees. Were these decrees in the early stages of the revolt? If the answer is “no,” the source does not connect the reason for the arrest of Rabbi Akiba with his participation in the revolt, and therefore the scholars who found in this source the pretext for the arrest Rabbi Akiba cannot regard this tradition as evidence for his participation in the Second Revolt.²¹³

I will now turn from Rabbi Akiba to the other sages and examine whether they took part in the Bar Kokhba Revolt.

1. The Presence of Sages in Bethar:²¹⁴

a. Evidence for the presence of Sages in Bethar in allusions to a local Sanhedrin

“Rab Judah said in Rab’s name: A Sanhedrin must not be established in a city which does not contain [at least] two who can speak [the seventy languages] and one who understands them. In the city of Bethar there were three and in Jabneh four.”²¹⁵ Abramski interpreted this source:

דגים שהיו מתקבצים ממקום למקום אמר להם מפני מה אתם בורחים אמרו לו מפני רשתות שמביאין עלינו בני אדם אמר להם רצונכם שתעלו ליבשה ונדור אני ואתם כשם שדרו אבותי עם אבותיכם אמרו לו אתה הוא שאומרים עליך פקח שבחיות לא פקח אתה אלא טפש אתה ומה במקום חיותנו אנו מתיראין במקום מיתתנו על אחת כמה וכמה אף אנחנו עכשיו שאנו יושבים עוסקים בתורה שכתוב בה (דברים ל, ו כו) “כי הוא חייך ואורך ימך” כך אם אנו הולכים ומבטלים ממנה עאכ”ו (אמרו לא היו ימים מועטים עד שתפסוהו לר”ע וחבשוהו בבית האסורים ותפסו לפפוס בן יהודה וחבשוהו אצלו.”

211 Herr, “Persecutions and Martyrdom,” 111, note 88.

212 Schäfer “Akiva,” 122.

213 Schäfer, “Akiva,” 122, rejects this tradition as historical evidence. He assumed that the source is a literary model on religious persecutions.

214 Aaharon Oppenheimer, “Betar als Zentrum vor dem Bar-Kochba-Aufstand,” in *Between Rome and Babylon*, 303–319 [= In *Neti’ot Ledavid*, Jubilee Volume for David Weiss Halivni, eds. Efrayim. B. Halivni, Yaakov Elman, Zvi. A. Steinfeld (Jerusalem: Orhot, 2005): 15–29 [in Hebrew].

215 *TB*, Sanhedrin 17:b. ואחד לשמוע אין בה שנים לדבר ואחד לשמוע אין מושיבין בה סנהדרין ובביתר הוו שלשה וביבנה ארבעה

“Apparently it was essentially a law court, and the sages certainly must have held a leading position in it. Perhaps one may learn from this that the sages possessed some ruling authority during the revolt in representing the people and giving instruction in religious laws.”²¹⁶

Goodblatt rejected the possibility that in Bethar a Sanhedrin existed which presumably played a part in the leadership of the revolt. The possible existence of a Sanhedrin in Bethar is mentioned only once in the aforementioned source in the Babylonian Talmud, while in a parallel text in the Jerusalem Talmud, *Bethar* is not mentioned at all.²¹⁷ In this issue, Goodblatt adopted the principle that Efron had laid down earlier, that the Palestine sources should be preferred to the Babylonian ones as reliable historical sources.²¹⁸ Because in the parallel text of the Jerusalem Talmud, Bethar was not mentioned, Goodblatt rejected the possible existence of a Sanhedrin in Bethar in connection with the Second Revolt.

b. Evidence for the presence of the Patriarchate family in Bethar

Additional evidence for the support of the sages and their participation in the revolt can be gleaned from the presence of the Patriarchate Gamliel family in Bethar during the course of the revolt. This evidence is derived from the words of Shimon ben Gamliel II, who served as president after the suppression of the revolt, in describing the fate of the children of Bethar:

Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel said: There were 500 scribal schools in Bethar, and the smallest of these had no less than 500 children. The children said: If the Romans come, we shall advance against them with our styluses and poke their eyes out. Finally, when for our sins (the enemy broke in) they wrapped each child in his book and burned him; and I alone am left of them all. He applied to himself the verse (Lamentation, 3:51): ‘Mine eye affected my soul because of all the daughters of my city.’²¹⁹

216 Abramski, 57; Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 625–626; Yeivin, 72–79.

217 *TJ*, Sheqalim, 5, 48:d:

“תני סנהדרין שיש בה שנים שיכולין לדבר וכולן ראוין לשמוע הרי זו ראויה לסנהדרין ג’ הרי זו בינונית ד’ הרי זו חכמה וביבנה היו בה ד’ בן עזאי ובן זומא ובן חכנאי ור’ א’ בן מתיה.”

218 For Efron’s critical methods for Talmudic sources, see Joshua Efron, “Simeon Ben Shataḥ and Alexander Jannaeus,” in Joshua Efron, *Studies on the Hasmonean Period* (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 143–218; idem, “Bar Kokhva,” 47–105.

219 See *TJ*, Ta’anot, 4:69a

“תני רבן שמעון בן גמליאל אומר חמש מאות בתי סופרים היו בביתר והקטן שבהן אין פחות מחמש מאות תינוקות והיו אומרים אם באו השונאים עלינו במכתובים הללו אנו יוצאין עליהן

Goodblatt denied the historical reliability of the source in the Jerusalem Talmud, which he considered to be literally impossible because, according to the words of Shimon ben Gamliel, it appears as though during the siege of Bethar, more than a quarter of a million children were being taught in its schools. In this instance, Goodblatt preferred to depend upon a parallel text from *Tractate Sotah* in the *Babylonian Talmud*:

Behold Rab Judah declared that Samuel said in the name of Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel, What means that which is written: Mine eye affecteth my soul, because of all the daughters of my city? There were a thousand pupils in my father's house; five hundred studied Torah and five hundred studied Greek wisdom, and of these there remained only I here and the son of my father's brother in Assia!²²⁰

The source and its parallels do not link the number of pupils, *a thousand youths*, with Bethar, but specifically with *my father's house*, which means that they studied in the home of Gamliel II in Yavne before the Second Revolt! Goodblatt preferred this version, and it does not contain any evidence of the presence of the Patriarchate family in Bethar during the revolt.²²¹ Abramski, in his discussion of the source, inferred that during his youth, Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel resided in Bethar and was among the survivors who remained after the suppression of the revolt.²²²

In a recent study on "Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel in Bethar," Noah Hacham rejected the conclusions of Goodblatt because of his preference for the source

ומנקרים את עיניהם. וכיוון שגרמו עונות היו כורכים כל אחד ואחד בספרו ושורפין אותו, ומכולם לא נשתייר אלא אני."

For the English translation, see Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 627. For parallels, see *Midrash Lamentations Rabba*, 2:4; 3:70 = *Lamentations Rabba*, 2:4 (Buber's ed.), 52:2; 3:5; 49:2, and parallel traditions: *TB* Gittin 58a: "There were four hundred synagogues in the city of Bethar, and in every one were four hundred teachers of children, and each one had under him four hundred pupils, and when the enemy entered there they pierced them with their staves, and when the enemy prevailed and captured them, they wrapped them in their scrolls and burnt them with fire." For a detailed review of these sources, see Hacham (above, note 166).

220 *TB*, *Sotah*, 49b:

"והאמר רב יהודה אמר שמואל משום רשב"ג מאי דכתיב (איכה ג, נא) עיני עוללה לנפשי מכל בנות עירי אלף ילדים היו בבית אבא, חמש מאות למדו תורה וחמש מאות למדו חכמת יוונית, ולא נשתייר מהן אלא אני כאן ובן אחי אבא בעסיא."

221 Goodblatt, "Did the Tanaaim Support Bar Kokhba," *Cathedra* 29 (1984): 6.

222 See Abramski, 117; Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 666.

in the Babylonian Talmud. He denied the claim that the exaggerated numbers of pupils in the source from the Jerusalem Talmud precluded its reliability. In his view, exaggeration in ancient texts is not a factor that determines the reliability of the source, and therefore the dependence of Goodblatt on realistic numbers is not problematic. Hacham also rejected the geographical interpretation that Goodblatt gave to the term *my father's house*. In contrast, Hacham believed that this was not related to a place name but to a family. After a comprehensive philological examination of the aforementioned source and its parallels, Hacham asserted that the sources from the Babylonian Talmud are guided in their attitude toward the revolt by the principle of "the law of the kingdom is the law," the result of it means opposition to uprisings in general against the local government. As a result the Babylonian sources tried to detach Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel from Bethar in particular and from the events of the revolt in general. On the other hand, the Jerusalem Talmud source that supported the revolt against foreign domination links him with Bethar, and in view of this, Hacham came to the conclusion that the source indicates that "Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel did not dissociate himself from the revolt, but on the contrary he included himself with all those Torah scholars who expressed their identification with the revolt, and therefore it seems reasonable to suppose that he was also a supporter of it."²²³

Despite the interesting interpretations of Hacham, it is difficult to adopt his conclusions. Does "the inaccuracy of numbers typical of all sources from the ancient world"²²⁴ turn them into reliable sources? Or is it perhaps that "as a general rule every exaggerated number must be judged in the context of understanding its symbolic significance"? In my view, it is just those realistic numbers that are sometimes important and decisive! Since the territorial circumference of Bethar, the last stronghold of the rebels, is known to us, the questions of the number of schools and the number of pupils in them do not only have symbolic significance, but are indeed important for the subject under discussion! Besides this, Bethar was not a central city during the course of the revolt. The city became the last redoubt of the rebel fighters, and only in the final stages did the place fill a central role in the revolt. In view of this, it is difficult to accept the testimonies that present this place in its final months as lively and flourishing and where a large and well-developed educational system could have been set up.

The various testimonies reviewed above, on which scholars have based the supposition that Rabbi Akiba was one of the organizers and initiators of

²²³ Hacham, above, note 166.

²²⁴ See Oppenheimer (above, note 168), note 4 in the article.

the Second Revolt, are mostly legendary sources that have often been associated with the Second Revolt because the name of Rabbi Akiba is mentioned in them. Scholars used similar bases from which to conclude that Rabbi Akiba was also the spiritual leader of the revolt who drew many sages in his wake to identify themselves with the rebels and join them. Such legendary sources should not be granted much historical value.²²⁵ Here, I will agree with what Goodblatt claimed: "That as long as there is no other evidence for the participation of Rabbi Akiba in the revolt, it is not possible to base this view on the authority of the tradition under discussion, and as we have seen, there is no such evidence."²²⁶ Nevertheless, although one cannot learn from these sources about the participation of the sages in the revolt, we can easily suppose, as noted at the beginning of the discussion, that sages could also be found among the rebel fighters who identified themselves with the causes for which the rebels went to war, and perhaps they even fell captive to the charisma of the leader of the revolt, Bar Kokhba.²²⁷

5.4 Local Leadership

The scholars who claimed that groups of brigands engaged in political banditry were formed during the years between the War of Quietus and the outbreak of the Second Revolt in 132 CE regarded the brothers from Kefar Haruvah and the hero Bar Daroma from Har Hamelech as exemplars of the anti-Roman brigand leaders rampant throughout the province. In their view, these were local military chieftains who had been active even before the Second Revolt and who banded together at the beginning of the revolt under the command and authority of Bar Kokhba.²²⁸ According to Applebaum, the description of these leaders was curtailed in the sources since in later traditions, Bar Kokhba had become the central figure while the personalities and activities of these earlier commanders were merged with his.²²⁹

225 Schäfer, "Bar Kokhba and the Rabbis," in *Bar Kokhba War Reconsidered*, 1–22; See also Isaiah Gafni, "Will the 'Real' Rabbis Please Stand Up: On the Repacking of the Rabbinic Model in Modern Times," in *Judaea-Palestina, Babylon and Rome: Jews in Antiquity*, eds. Benjamin Isaac, Yuval Shahar (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012): 295–307, see mainly, pages 303–307.

226 See Goodblatt, "Nasi," 125–126.

227 For our study about the opposition to the revolt, see below 459–467.

228 See previous note.

229 Applebaum, "Results," 232.

However, in view of the discussion about the sources describing these figures and my review of the political banditry cases that preceded the Second Revolt, I cannot concur with such claims. The traditions that describe the actions of the brothers from Kefar Haruvah and the heroism of Bar Daroma have no historical value and give no indication of local leadership before the outbreak of the Second Revolt.²³⁰ From the Judean Desert letters found in the places of refuge and safe havens of the rebels during the final stages of the revolt,²³¹ a picture emerges, although fragmentary and random, about the civilian and military administration of Bar Kokhba and about some of the local leaders in the service of the commander of the Second Revolt.²³²

The first and partial publications of the letters led scholars to far-reaching conclusions about the leadership of the revolt that had been active alongside Bar Kokhba. For example, in my Hebrew edition of this book, I adopted the conclusions of Yadin that appeared in the first publication of the letters and the other finds. According to the content of the letters, he reconstructed the area over which Bar Kokhba had control as extending from Jericho to the southern end of the Dead Sea. He divided this area into three sectors: The central one around Ein Gedi extended northward to Wadi Murabba'at and southward to Nahal Ze'elim. The northern sector lay beyond Wadi Murabba'at, and the southern sector stretched from the environs of Nahal Ze'elim down to Masada.²³³

230 See above, 98–101.

231 Hanan Eshel, "A Survey of Scholarship on the Legal Documents Found in the Refuge Caves," in *Halakah in the Light of Epigraphy*, eds. Albert Baumgarten Hanan Eshel, Ranon Katzoff, Shani Tzoref (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011): 103–150. This is a translation of the Hebrew version: "The History of Research and Survey of the Finds of the Refuge Caves," in *Refuge Caves I*, 23–68.

232 Our discussion is based on a variety of publications. Yadin's first publications, in Hebrew and English: Yigael Yadin, "Camp D," *Yediot* (1961): 49–64 (in Hebrew) [In English: "Expedition D," *Israel Exploration Journal* 11 (1961): 36–52]; Yadin, "Expedition D: The Cave of the Letters," *Yediot* (1962): 204–236 [In English: "Expedition D: The Cave of the Letters," *Israel Exploration Journal* 12 (1962): 227–257]; Yigael Yadin, *Bar Kokhba, The Rediscovery of the Legendary Hero of the Last Jewish Revolt Against Imperial Rome*, Jerusalem 1971; and the Collections: *DJD* 11 [= P. Benoit, J.T. Milik, R. de-Vaux, *Les Grottes de Murabba'at*, Oxford 1961]; *JDS* 11 [= N. Lewis, *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters, Greek Papyri*, Jerusalem 1989]; *DJD* XXVII [= H. M. Cotton, A. Yardeni, *Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek Texts from Nahal Hever and other Site: The Seiyal Collection*, Oxford 1997]; *JDS* 3 [= Y. Yadin, J. C. Greenfield, A. Yardeni, B. A. Levine, *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters, Hebrew, Aramaic and Nabatean-Aramaic Papyri*, Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2002].

233 Yadin, "Camp D," *Judean Desert Caves*, 62–63 [in Hebrew]. In the English version. Yadin omitted these conclusions. See "Expedition D," *Israel Exploration Journal* 11 (1961): 50–52.

The claim of Doron Sar-Avi was that the assumption of the Judean Desert as a separate military and administrative area is erroneous and overlooks the fact that the documents clarify only what occurred in the place from which the refugees had fled. This is an exaggerated claim because the conclusions are not based on the place where the letters were found but on the contents of the letters that present a situation before the time they were brought to the place of refuge.²³⁴

The three sectors were under the command of local commanders, whose names and some of their activities are mentioned in the letters. The two commanders who headed the military administration in Ein Gedi were Yehonathan ben Bahyan and Mesbala ben Sime'on.²³⁵ From the letters, it appears that their main tasks were assistance to the Bar Kokhba fighters, which focused on recruiting for the rebel camp,²³⁶ imprisonment of soldiers and officers who misbehaved²³⁷ or had deserted the rebel camp and found refuge in the far reaches of Ein Gedi,²³⁸ and sending military reinforcements according to the needs of the Bar Kokhba fighters.²³⁹ Besides this, they were in charge of sending supplies, food provisions (such as wheat²⁴⁰ and salt),²⁴¹ and religious requisites (for example, the four spices for the Succot festival).²⁴² Another task

234 Sar-Avi, *Toponymes*, 9.

235 *JDS* 2002, P. Yadin 49:2; P. Yadin 50:2–3; P. Yadin 51:1 (Only Yehonatha, son of Ba'yan); P. Yadin 53:2 (Only Yehonathan, son of Ba'yan); P. Yadin 54:2; P. Yadin 55:1–2; P. Yadin 56:1–2. A third addressee, the son of Ḥayyāṭa; P. Yadin 57:2; P. Yadin 58:1; P. Yadin 63:1 Only Mesabalah's name was restored; P. Yadin 52:1–2 *DJD XXVII*, 13:14 Only Mesbala, son of Sime'on).

236 P. Yadin 54.

237 P. Yadin 50:4–6: You are to deliver to me 'Elazar son of ḤTH immediately before the Sabbath; P. Yadin 54 "Yeshua' son of Pamyreene (תדמריה), you are to seize for dispatch to me under guard. And do not fail to seize the sword that is on him Send it on"; P. Yadin 56, 319 "and the youth—that you bring (them along) with these Theodosius or Tyrsus son of Theodorus and let him come with you for we need him."

238 P. Yadin 54: 10–11 "Any Teko'an man who is found with you, let the house they reside in them burn"; P. Yadin 55: 3 "Any person from Tekoa', or from other places, who is with you—you are to dispatch them to me right away."

239 P. Yadin, 56:3–4; P. Yadin 57:2.

240 P. Yadin 50: P. Yadin 54: 3–4. "You are ordered to examine and to seize the wheat that he brought Hannu/in son of Yishmael and ship of them to me." He orders that a certain amount of wheat should be confiscated after he found out that it was stolen by Hannu/in.

241 P. Yadin 56:7–8 "pack (baling) over the salt so that none will fall out of your hands and transport (this) by mules"; P. Yadin: 2–4.

242 P. Yadin 57: 3–4. The addressee is: Yehudah son of Menaseh at Qiryat 'Arabayya. Simon is letting him know that he had sent two donkeys and two men to Yehonathan son of Bayan

that these two commanders had to fulfill was to carry out the confiscation of lands on behalf of the civilian administrator in Ein Gedi, Yehonathan ben Mahanaim, whose title was the *parnas* of the Ein Gedi village.²⁴³

The letters also mention Yehoshua ben Galgola, who held the position of Camp Chief²⁴⁴ and was apparently in charge of the northern sector.²⁴⁵ Bar Kokhba addressed a number of letters to him, one of them about the Galileans²⁴⁶ and another about the supply of five *kors* of produce to the Bar Kokhba camp.²⁴⁷ Like the commanders of Ein Gedi, he was also in charge of carrying out the decisions of the civilian administration. In a letter addressed to him by the *parnassim* of the Beth Mashkho village, which lay within the area of his military command, he was requested by Yeshua ben Elazar and Eleazar ben Yehoseph to return a cow that had been confiscated by one of his soldiers to its rightful owner, Yehoseph ben Artison.²⁴⁸ Yadin identified Shimon ben Mattitya as the commander of the southern sector. His name is mentioned in a letter that he sent to Bar Kokhba about the movements of the Roman camps in his sector.²⁴⁹

In addition to the local military commanders, there were the *parnasim* or administrators,²⁵⁰ some of whom were mentioned in the letters. Examples:

and Mesbala son of Sime'on, in order to pack up and deliver palm branches and citrons. In addition he orders them to send two more men with myrtle branches and willows, the Four Kinds to celebrate the Sukkoth festival. P. Yadin 52, p. 351–362. See Yadin, *Bar-Kokhba*, 128–129; David Amit, Hanan Eshel, “A Tetradrachm of Bar-Kokhba from a Cave in Nahal Hever,” *Israel Numismatic Journal* 11 (1993): 33–35; Hayim Lapin, “Palm Fronds and Citrons: Notes on Two Letters from Bar Kosiba’s Administration,” *Hebrew Union College Annual* 64 (1993): 111–135; Gerhard W. Nebe, “Die beiden griechischen Briefe des Jonatan Archivs in Engedi aus dem Zweiten jüdischen Aufstand 132–135 nach Chr.,” *Revue de Qumrân* 17 (1996): 275–289; Aharon Oppenheimer, “Bar Kokhba and the Observance of Mitzvot,” in *Between Rome and Babylon*, 283–291; Zeev Safrai, “Halakhic Observance in the Documents of the Judean Desert,” in *Innovations in the Research of the Bar Kokhba Revolt*, 113–137 [in Hebrew].

243 P. Yadin 44, 44–45; P. Yadin 45, 58–59; Yadin, *Bar Kokhba*, 175–176.

244 P. Yadin 44, 43, 42; *DJD* II 24, 42, 43, 44; Yadin, *Bar Kokhba*, 136–138.

245 Yadin, “Expedition D,” 63.

246 43 No. 11, *DJD*, II, no. 43, and see above, 170–173.

247 *DJD*, II, no. 44.

248 *DJD* II, no. 42, Yadin, *Bar Kokhba*, 126.

249 P. Yadin 54. See Joseph. T. Milik, “Le travail d’édition de manuscrit du Desert di Juda,” in *Volume du Congrès, Strasbourg 1956, Suppléments to Vetus Testamentum*, IV, ed. George W. Anderson. (Leiden: Brill, 1957): 21; Yadin, *Bar Kokhba*, 126. He thinks that Yeshua bar Tadmoraya (the Palmyrenian?) was an officer who broke the rules and therefore he was arrested and transferred to Bar Kokhba.

250 On the Parnasim, see *JDS*, 48–49.

Yehonathan ben Mahanaim, the *parnas* of Ein Gedi;²⁵¹ Yehonathan ben Yeshua and Miryam, and Horon ben Yishmael,²⁵² as well as the *parnasim* of Beth Mashkho, Yeshua ben Elazar, Eleazar ben Yehoseph,²⁵³ and Hillel ben Garis.²⁵⁴ An additional name of the *parnas* Shim'on Dasoi' from the Beth Guvrin region is mentioned in an official lead weight of Bar Kokhba's administration found at Horvat Alim, an underground hiding complex from the Judean Shephelah.²⁵⁵ The *parnasim* were engaged in the leasing of lands appropriated by Bar Kokhba and in levying the tithe taxes at the rate of one-tenth of agricultural produce. The revenue from these were used to finance the rebellion.²⁵⁶

Although the actual part played by these military commanders in the various sectors under the control of Bar Kokhba should not be inferred from the letters, it is these sources that clarify the issue of the leadership of the revolt from a different perspective, and the letters' main advantage is that they cannot legitimately be accused of any kind of biased writing. The letters indicate a system of relations between the leader of the revolt and his subordinate commanders. It may be that they imply tensions between him and the local commanders, mainly in connection with their loyalty and their methods of action.

In the letters that Bar Kokhba wrote to his military commanders in Ein Gedi, Yehonathan and Mesbala, he was compelled to use harsh language toward them and to utter severe threats because they seemed to have shown disloyalty to him. He accused them of granting refuge to the men of Tekoa, who evaded his recruiting order and fled to Ein Gedi, where they received refuge.²⁵⁷ In another letter, Bar Kokhba demanded that they hand over to him Elazar bar Hitta, a rich landowner of Ein Gedi, who refrained from cooperating with the leader of the revolt,²⁵⁸ and also Yeshua bar Tadmoraya.²⁵⁹ If the

251 *DJD*, II, no. 46; P. Yadin 44, 44–45; P. Yadin 45, 58–59.

252 P. Yadin 42, 144.

253 See above, note 248.

254 *DJD* II, 24; Yadin, *Bar Kokhba*, 182–183. He argued that Hillel son of Garis was not a *Parnas* but a rich landowner.

255 See Amos Kloner, "Lead Weights of Bar Kokhba's Administration," *Israel Exploration Journal* 40 (1990): 58–67. See above, xxxx.

256 See above, 456.

257 See above, note 238.

258 P. Yadin 50; "You are to deliver to me 'El'azar son of ḤTH immediately, before the Sabbath." Yadin, *Bar Kokhba*, 128.

259 P. Yadin 54; Yadin in *Rediscovery*, identified him as a military officer who was disloyal to Bar Kokhba. However in *JDS*, 305, Yeshua son of the Palmyrene (תדמריה) is called "a person" and in the commentary on page 311 there is no reference to his military position.

letters do indeed reflect the situation within the areas under the control of these commanders close to the termination of the revolt,²⁶⁰ the most prominent evidence is this harsh letter of Bar Kokhba to Yehonathan and Mesbala. These two men took care of their own private affairs in preference to the interests of the revolt, and Bar Kokhba therefore accused them of misbehavior: "You are dwelling; eating and drinking of the property of the House of Israel, but showing no concern for your brothers in any manner."²⁶¹ He also accuses them of not obeying the orders they received to take care of the boats in their charge: "And as regard the boat(s) which they have inspected at your place—you have not done any thing at all."

The dire straits of the rebels during the final stages of the revolt, at a time when they were subjected to heavy Roman pressure, apparently caused a deep crisis among the rebels, some of whom deserted their leaders in order to save their skins. The letters were indeed addressed to the local commanders of the rebels who fled during those final stages of the revolt to the caves in the Judean Desert, yet even there the Romans succeeded in capturing them. In my opinion, these letters should not be regarded as evidence for a split in the rebel camp. Instead, view them as indirect testimony of the success of the Roman attack that diluted the fighting forces, after which the central leader lost control over his subordinates and supporters who did not entrench themselves in Bethar. At this stage of the revolt, these rebels sought ways to escape from Roman hands.

5.5 Opposition to the Revolt

In the chapter on the active participants in the revolt, I proved that the territorial extent of the Second Revolt covered limited areas in the region of Judaea and its close environs, and therefore the claim made by certain scholars that the Bar Kokhba revolt was a rebellion by a majority of the people is merely a supposition.²⁶² Actually, most of the population in Provincia Judaea adopted

260 Yadin, *Bar Kokhba*, 131; See Oppenheimer, "Bar Kokhba Revolt," 15. He argues that we cannot learn from the letters about the desperate situation of the rebels, but it presents a regular situation in military units.

261 P. Yadin 49 (+5/6 Hev 49), *JDS* 2002, 282.

262 Israel Ben Shalom, "The Support of the Sages for Bar Kokhba's Revolt," *Cathedra* 29 (1983): 20–21, claimed for the unity of the nation during the revolt. This conclusion is based on the story in which the sages reproached Bar Kokhba's way of recruiting the soldiers and his agreement with this criticism.

a passive stance and did not take part in the revolt. However, it is not always possible to attribute this stance to any particular opposition to the revolt or to its leader,²⁶³ even though a large proportion of the Jews in the province did not revolt.²⁶⁴

In the years that preceded the Great Revolt and during its course, it was easy to discern two clear camps among the Jewish population that indicated two different approaches toward the Roman regime. On one hand, there was the pro-Roman camp that cooperated with the foreign conqueror and opposed, sometimes even actively, anti-Roman rebellion. On the other hand, there was an active anti-Roman camp that sought to liberate itself from the burden of Roman rule through armed struggle. But even in this camp, there was no consensus regarding the method of action or the type of leadership, as testified to by the internecine warfare during the course of the Great Revolt. This division was noticeable even with regard to the stance of the Romans who intervened time and time again in internal Jewish disputes and cooperated with the pro-Roman faction in the Jewish population.²⁶⁵ Even after the suppression of the revolt, Roman punitive measures reflected the attitude of the Jewish population to the revolt. The main victims were the rebels, while the collaborators enjoyed preferential treatment by the Romans.²⁶⁶

This was not the case with regard to the Jewish population in the Second Revolt and to the question of whether any opposition to the revolt existed among it. In the view of a few scholars, this unity characterized the Second Revolt and set it apart. In the Second Revolt, as compared with the Great Revolt, the Jewish people were united and banded together around the leadership of Bar Kokhba because of the ruling institutions of the Yavneh period.²⁶⁷ Nonetheless, one should not ignore the fact that the Second Revolt did not spread through all the areas of the province and did not include most of the Jewish population, even though the causes for the revolt affected the entire population in the province. Moreover, in the opinion of certain scholars, some of the sources that deal with the issue under discussion indicated that there was (a) a faction within the Jewish population opposed to the leader of

263 Applebaum, "Background," 219, argued for the existence of neutral circles without a decisive viewpoint, which distanced them from the rebellious movement.

264 See above, 152–172, our review on the part of Galilee in the Second Revolt.

265 For a summary of these issues, see James S. McLaren, "Going to War against Rome: The Motivation of the Jewish Rebels," in *The Jewish Revolt against Rome: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Mladen Popović (Leiden: Brill, 2011): 129–153.

266 See above, 381–384.

267 See Oppenheimer, "Bar Kokhba Revolt," 40–42; Ben Shalom (above, note 35), 14.

the revolt and to the revolt in general and (b) a faction within the rebel camp during the course of the revolt that resulted from various disputes, such as those concerning the attitude of the rebels toward their leaders, the methods of action, and the attitude toward the Roman enemy.

5.6 Factions in the Population

The response of Rabbi Yohanan ben Torta to the declaration of Rabbi Akiba regarding the messianic nature of Bar Kokhba: "Akiba, grass will grow through your cheeks before the Son of David arrives,"²⁶⁸ was interpreted as proof of the attitude among the sages toward the leadership of Bar Kokhba. However, this saying was rejected as proof for the claim that Rabbi Yohanan and the other sages were opposed to the revolt itself, a claim that was based mainly on the assumption that Rabbi Akiba sought a central position for himself in the leadership of the revolt.

In the view of researchers, the warm regard of Rabbi Akiba toward the leader of the revolt and his support of the revolt were shared by all the sages. Moreover, because of the influence, importance, and public esteem of Rabbi Akiba in comparison with Rabbi Yohanan ben Torta, the dictum of the latter was given marginal value and did not necessarily indicate any divergence of position among the sages towards the revolt.²⁶⁹ Yet, even if the position of Rabbi Akiba among the sages of his period was an eminent one and of greater influence than that of Rabbi Yohanan ben Torta, the dictum of Rabbi Yohanan cannot be ignored because it does represent a view among a few of the sages of that time regarding the methods of redemption and liberation from Roman rule.²⁷⁰ Hence, the claim that the dictum of Rabbi Yohanan is only an expression of his opposition to the messianic nature of the Bar Kokhba's leadership and not his opposition to the revolt is not a convincing one. Such a distinction

²⁶⁸ *TJ*, Taanit, 4:8.

²⁶⁹ See Ben Shalom (above, note 262), 19 Note 43. Oppenheimer, "Messianismus in römischer Zeit: Zur Pluralität eines Begriffes bei Juden und Christen," *Between Rome and Babylon*, 270–271, note 19 [Bar Kokhba's Messianism," in *Messianism and Eschatology, A Collection of Essays*, ed. Zvi Baras (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center, 1983): 155, note 9 [in Hebrew]. He argued that the different status of R. Akiba and R. Yohanan, son of Torta, among the sages is so deep that it is impossible to conclude that the difference of opinion between the two represents two diverse approaches to the Revolt.

²⁷⁰ See the detailed study of Ephraim E. Urbach, *The Sages: Their Concepts and Belief* (Jerusalem: Magness, 1987), chapter 17.

is unacceptable!²⁷¹ The dispute between Rabbi Akiba and Rabbi Yohanan, as noted, is not focused only on the Second Revolt and its leader but is more generally about the nature of redemption. Rabbi Akiba regarded national redemption as an internal realistic process within the historical world of events and detached it from future utopian-apocalyptic prognostications. Therefore, when he declared the messianism of Bar Kokhba, he did not mean the Messiah of the end of days but a national leader who would bring about the redemption of Judah and her deliverance from the burden of Rome.²⁷²

The dictum of Rabbi Yohanan represents a different trend in the Judaism of that period, which renounced the realistic elements of redemption and incorporated it with supernatural processes. The Messiah associated with these processes was the final Messiah, who had to be a descendant of the Davidic line and he would appear at the end of days.²⁷³

The ideological oppositions about the nature of redemption were translated into the practical activities and reactions of the two factions among the sages of that period. One faction believed that liberation from Roman rule was possible through armed struggle, which would result in political freedom. This group believed in a national messiah and therefore adopted an active stance expressed in the words of Rabbi Akiba. The other faction claimed that redemption and liberation would be accompanied by the advent of the Messiah at the end of days, and therefore they adopted a passive stance.

The dictum of Rabbi Yohanan did not distinguish between the nonrecognition of the leader of the revolt and support for the revolt. Whoever upheld the idea that the coming of the Messiah would occur at the end of days and linked the Messiah with the House of David could not support the revolt. This was because such an individual would view the revolt as a realistic and part of the historical process and would prefer to adopt a passive stance toward it and toward its leader and his followers, even if the causes for its outbreak were justified.²⁷⁴

271 Oppenheimer (above, note 269), 155 stated: "In the Mishnaic and Talmudic periods the historical causes and the state of mind, do not allow to distinguish between religion and state, or between religious leadership and political-military leadership, therefore, the denial of Bar Kokhba leadership on these grounds, entirely rejects his leadership," (translated from the Hebrew). In light of this argument, the citation in note 9 is surprising and does not suit his interpretation.

272 See Urbach (above, note 270), 605; See also Joseph Heinemann, *Aggadah and its development* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1974), 106–109: "R. Akiba's realistic approach of Liberation," [in Hebrew].

273 See Urbach (above, note 270), 607; Kolitz, 207.

274 Kanael, "Notes on the Dates," 44. He argued that right from the beginning, the sages and the leaders had reservations about the Revolt. The sayings of R. Yohanan ben

On this issue, it is worthwhile stressing the ideological changes that occurred within the different camps during the intervening period between the two revolts. During the Great Revolt, the militant trend toward rebellion against Roman prevailed among the groups who upheld various doctrines of messianism, anticipated the end of days, and believed in a redeeming Messiah.²⁷⁵ During the Bar Kokhba revolt, as reflected in the dictum of Rabbi Yohanan, these groups became passive and postponed the end of time, even though they continued to uphold messianic doctrines relating to the end of days and the House of David. On the other hand, many of the sages, who had come under the influence of Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai and Rabban Gamaliel II and advocated compromise and peaceful relations with the Roman authorities, became activists and aspired to preempt the end of time and to be liberated from the burden of Rome through war. Therefore, they chose national leaders who excelled mainly in great physical strength and charismatic personality and who gathered around himself those with similar views.

The failure of the Second Revolt and the eradicating decrees of Hadrian that followed it did not only weaken messianic faith but even strengthened the faction represented by Rabbi Yohanan ben Torta. After the defeat of Bar Kokhba, the national messiah, the figure of the Messiah became a spiritual one associated with the Davidic dynasty, and his advent would be accompanied by messianic tribulations and calamities.²⁷⁶

5.6.1 *Faction within the Rebel Camp*

A certain number of scholars have found evidence for a split within the rebel camp during the course of the revolt. Some of them linked the dispute among the rebels with the conquest of Jerusalem. In the view of those scholars, the issues that caused the split were the very conquest of the city, control over it, the renewal of the sacrificial cult, and the abandonment of city after the Roman counterattack against the rebels.²⁷⁷

Non-recognition of Bar Kokhba as Prince

Kanael noted, as a supposition requiring confirmation, that after the conquest of Jerusalem in 132 CE, a large conference was held in the city to discuss the

Torta and R. Yehoshua ben Hananiah in the Rimmon Valley are proof of it. However, I showed above that R. Yehoshua's sayings are not generally related to the revolt (see above, 363–365). Yet, I think that R. Yohanan's sayings should not be interpreted as realistic consideration for the success or failure of the revolt.

275 Rappaport, "Background of the Great Revolt," 17–20.

276 See Urbach (above, note 270), 607–511; Liver, *House of David*, 147.

277 See, for example, Devir, 136–139.

situation and governance arrangements. He alleged that prominent at this conference were precisely those opposition forces among the sages who recognized Bar Kokhba only as a governor and military commander in Israel but did not recognize his princely status of because he was not a descendant of Beth Hillel. Under the pressure of these groups, Bar Kokhba was forced to formally forgo his title of prince, and his partner in leadership, Eleazar, was forced to forgo his role as high priest.²⁷⁸

Renewal of the Sacrificial Cult and the Rebuilding of the Temple

The renewal of the sacrificial cult and the rebuilding of the Temple were, in the view of some scholars, a bone of contention between the leadership of the revolt, which opposed it for military considerations, and factions among the fighters (mainly those from the priestly clans), who aspired to rebuild the Temple and renew the sacrificial cult in it.²⁷⁹

In his study “The Temple Mount and the Temple in the Teachings of Rashbi,”²⁸⁰ Beer interpreted a number of homilies delivered in the name of Rashbi (Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai) as divine judgment on the failure of the Second Revolt. The downfall of the Bar Kokhba revolt is interpreted in those homilies as being caused by the non-construction of the altar and the Temple and the non-renewal of the sacrificial cult by the rebels. Beer thought that even though the homilies were given for theological purposes, they were meant to justify the course of historical events and especially the failure of the revolt. At the conclusion of his article, Beer claimed that they reflect an actual situation: “The Temple Mount, the Temple, and the sacrificial cult occupied extensive place in the thought of Rashbi. Sometimes it seems clear that this thought contains elements of actuality from which one can learn about the mood of the sermonizer and his audience . . . In fact in his protracted engagement in this issue, Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai was influenced by the dramatic events that occurred during his generation with the fall of Jerusalem in the hands of the Romans

278 Kanael, “Notes on the Dates,” 44–45. Against the argument that the “Prince” should be an ancestor of the House of Hillel, see Goodblatt, “Palestinian Patriarchate,” 94–95. Likewise, it is not clear what the background was for Eleazar, ceded the high priesthood.

279 See Devir, 153–154; Goodblatt, “Did the Tanaaim Support Bar Kokhba,” *Cathedra* 29 (1984): 10–20 [in Hebrew].

280 Moshe Beer, “Shim'on Bar Yohai and Jerusalem,” in *Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period, Abraham Schalit Memorial Volume*, eds. Aharon Oppenheimer, Uriel Rappaport, Menahem Stern (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, Ministry of Defence, 1980): 361–375; See also idem, “A Single Evidence to the Question of Dis-Renewal of Sacrifices during the Days of Bar Kokhba,” in *Nazir Echav: A Book of Essays and Articles in Memory of Rabbi David Cohen the Nazir*, eds. She'ar Yashuv Cohen, et al. (Jerusalem: Nezer David, 1977): Vol. 1, 196–206 [in Hebrew].

after it had been liberated by Bar Kokhba and his soldiers.”²⁸¹ Beer’s concluding words indirectly inform us about the dispute and that those who attributed the failure of the revolt to the non-renewal of the cult were those who had supported its renewal during the revolt. Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai, in expounding the verse in 1 Samuel 8:7 said, “And God said to Samuel, Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you but they have rejected me that I should reign over them,” and in the Midrash: “they will reject three things: the Kingdom of Heaven, the Royal House of David, and the Building of the Temple . . . for it is written: And all Israel saw (and he said we do not have) [and he said what is it to us] a part in David, this is the Kingdom of Heaven, neither in the son of Jesse, this is the Royal House of David, every man to his tents [to your tents] O Israel. Now see that your House of David is the building of the Temple.”²⁸²

Beer noted that in this homily, Rashbi voices a rebuke to those of his generation who did not build the Temple. In the words of Rabbi Shimon ben Mansiah, a contemporary of Rashbi: “Israel will never see a sign (of blessing) [of redemption] until they return and request all three of them.”²⁸³ These words exemplify the approach of the sages who regarded the existence of the Temple as a necessary condition for the welfare of Israel and the process of its redemption.²⁸⁴

The Abandonment of Jerusalem during the Revolt

Kolitz thought that the decision of Bar Kokhba to retreat from Jerusalem for tactical reasons and to take refuge in the stronghold of Bethar was the cause for the split between the sages of that generation and the leader of the revolt.

²⁸¹ Ibid., 375.

²⁸² *Midrash Shemu’el*, 13:2; *Yalkut Shim’oni to Samuel*, sign 106.

א"ר שמעון בן יוחאי אתם מאסתם בו גם אותי מאסו אמ לו כשלשה הן עתידין {לראות} למאוס במלכות שמים ובמלכות בית דוד ובבנין בית המקדש. אתי מאס בשלשתן בימי רחבעם הה"ד אין לנו חלק בדוד ולא נחלה בבן ישי זה מלכות בית דוד לאהליך ישר' ראה ביתך בית דוד זה בנין בית המקדש

ילקוט שמעוני לשמואל א—פרק ח—רמז קו: "ויאמר ה' אל שמואל שמע בקול העם (הזה). תני ר' שמעון בן יוחאי אומר לא אותך מאסו כי אותי מאסו וכו' בשלשה דברים עתידין למאוס, במלכות שמים, ובמלכות בית דוד, ובבנין בית המקדש, אימתי מאסו שלשתם בימי ירבעם, הדא הוא דכתיב ויען איש ישראל ויאמרו אין לנו חלק בדוד זו מלכות שמים, ולא נחלה בבן ישי זו מלכות בית דוד, איש לאהליו ישראל ולא לבית המקדש אל תקרי לאהליו אלא לאהליו. א"ר סימון בבר מנסיא אין ישראל רואין סימן גאולה לעולם עד שיחזרו ויבקשו שלשתם, הדא הוא דכתיב אחר ישובו בני ישראל ובקשו את ה' אלהיהם זו מלכות שמוים, ואת דוד מלכם זו מלכות בית דוד, ופחדו אל ה' ואל טובו זה בית המקדש"

²⁸³ Ibid.

²⁸⁴ Beer (above, note 280), 368–370. See also Gerald J. Blidstein, “The Monarchic Imperative in Rabbinic Perspective,” *Association for Jewish Studies Review* 7–8 (1982–1983): 27–29.

The visionary hope of Rabbi Akiba, the spiritual leader of the revolt, was the liberation of Jerusalem, the rebuilding of the Temple, and the restoration of prophecy; and therefore, the renunciation of Jerusalem led to a rift between Bar Kokhba and the sages, to the extent that the latter left the camp of the rebels who retreated to Bethar.²⁸⁵

Devir also referred to the split in the rebel camp at this stage of the revolt, although in his view, the reasons for the dispute were different and derived from an opposition to the zealous ideology of the desert that Bar Kokhba represented and from the undermining of unity and understanding between the two leaders of the revolt: Bar Kokhba, the messianic scion, and Eleazar, the high priest. The dissension between the two forced Eleazar to break away from the rebel camp, and following his resignation, Bar Kokhba killed him.²⁸⁶

I previously argued that Jerusalem was not conquered by Jewish fighters during the Second Revolt. Therefore, I reject all claims that assign the split in the rebel camp to the stage in which the rebels controlled Jerusalem. In my argument, I stressed that one of the wise decisions of Bar Kokhba was not to conquer Jerusalem. I believe this because besides the military danger of clashing with the Roman legion Legio x Fretensis, which guarded the city, the conquest of the city would have forced him to continue his struggle against the Romans—not in accordance with purely military considerations, but with religious ones associated with the holiness of Jerusalem and the place of the Temple Mount and the Temple in the mind and spirit of some of his fighters. Therefore, in order to spare himself and his fighters such constraints, he renounced the conquest of the city from the very start.²⁸⁷

The Killing of Eleazar of Modi'in

The killing of Eleazar of Modi'in in Bethar by Bar Kokhba²⁸⁸ has been interpreted as proof of the split among the fighters, since the words of Eleazar, "Do not sit in judgment today, do not sit in judgment today," were attributed to the crisis that affected some of the besieged in Bethar under his leadership and were interpreted as echoing the dispute among the rebels whether to yield to the Romans or continue to defend themselves in Bethar under siege.²⁸⁹ However, the legendary nature of the source does not allow us to discuss the

285 Kolitz, 199, 205.

286 Devir, 145, 149.

287 See above, 287–288.

288 See our study of the text on 365–368.

289 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 603–604; Oppenheimer, "Bar Kokhba Revolt," 59.

split described in it as reliable historical evidence of a rift in the rebel camp in Bethar.²⁹⁰

From the sources dealing with the Second Revolt, one cannot indicate any kind of practical opposition among those involved who refrained from cooperating in the revolt with the rebels and their leader for ideological reasons, nor cooperating fully with the Roman authorities in order to subvert the revolt. Only in the final stages of the revolt, when the situation of the rebels was desperate, "the package came undone," and the unity of the fighters that had so characterized the revolt in its early stages began to disappear. Many of the fighters deserted the rebel camp and found refuge in the caves of the Judaeen Desert and in the system of hideouts in the plains of Judaea.

290 Ben Shalom (above note 262), 29 and note 69. He rejects Alon and Oppenheimer's conclusion and argues that there is no evidence for a controversy among the rebels.

Results of the Revolt

I noted in my discussion of the causes for the outbreak of the Second Revolt and its territorial expansion a noticeable lack of sources that could have given a continuous and detailed description of the course of the Bar Kokhba revolt. But in discussing the outcome of the revolt, a wide variety of sources are available—Jewish, Egyptian, and Roman—that, in part, describe the immediate results of the suppression of the revolt by the Romans and, in part, deal with the results that retrospectively show clear evidence of having had a long-term influence.

Three types of sources concern the same subject, a description of the harsh outcome of the suppression of the revolt that severely affected the Jewish population. Similar descriptions have been found in a number of those sources. However, any discussion of these sources must take into account the problem of their reliability as historical sources, since it appears that a description of the outcome of the revolt in these sources resemble the descriptions of the revolt itself and that the guiding line of the writers was their world outlook, their point of view, and their general attitude toward the revolt.

The bias of these sources in all their variety raises the question of whether it is possible in accordance with them to determine the magnitude of the destruction and ruin brought about through the suppression of the Second Revolt. It is also worth asking whether there is any justification for the estimations and determinations given in the research literature that the outcome of the Second Revolt was a very heavy blow to Jewry in ancient times.¹ Another worthwhile question to ask is whether the punitive acts of the Romans as described in the sources were meant as collective punishments or perhaps were intended only against those who actively participated in the revolt. My study of the results of the revolt will focus on the three types of sources listed above, in accordance with which I will discuss the political, religious, and socioeconomic consequences of the revolt.

6.1 Political Consequences

One of the severe results that scholars have attributed to the Second Revolt was the change in the composition of the Jewish population in Judaea. In their

¹ See Applebaum, "Results," 258–260.

view, the number of Jewish inhabitants in the country decreased to the extent that they became a minority within the local population after the slaughter, plagues, famine, and captivity that accompanied the suppression of the revolt.² However, this claim overlooks a few problems. First, population assessments in the Land of Israel in ancient times was a complicated matter, and over the years different estimates were made about the number of inhabitants during the period under discussion.³ These numbers range between maximal estimates of five to six million inhabitants to the minimal ones of a million inhabitants in the country.⁴ With a lack of such basic data, how can one determine the percentage of the Jewish population remaining in Judaea and in the Land of Israel after the revolt?⁵ Second, knowledge of the number slain and captured during the Second Revolt is based on sources that are difficult to accept as reliable data. The Jerusalem Talmud source describes the killing as follows:

Rabbi Yohanan said, **voice** (Gen 25:22) [this refers to]: Hadrian the Emperor killing eighty thousand myriads in Bethar. R. Yohanan said: Eighty thousand pairs of trumpet sounders besieged Bethar, and each one commanded a number of soldiers. Bar Koziba was there with two hundreds thousand [men with] amputated fingers . . . They went about slaughtering them until a horse sunk in blood up to its nostrils, and the blood carried away boulders that weighted forty sela until it went four miles into the sea. If you should think that it (Bethar) was close to the sea, behold, it was forty miles distant from the sea.

Hadrian the wicked had a great vineyard, eighteen miles by eighteen miles like as the distance from Tiberias to Sepphoris. He encircled it with the corpses from Bethar, piled [as high] as a man standing [and as

2 Michael Avi-Yonah, *The Jews of Palestine: A Political History from the Bar Kokhba War to the Arab Conquest* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1976), 12–14.

3 For a general review of issues in demography and population history in the Greco-Roman period, see the research of Walter Scheidel of Stanford University, *Princeton/Stanford Working Papers in Classics Population and Demography*, Version 1.0, April 2006. See also Magen Broshi, "Eretz Israel Population During the Roman Period," in *Eretz Israel from the Destruction of the Second Temple*, 442–445; idem, "The Capacity of Eretz Israel during the Byzantine Period and Its Demographic Implication," in *Man and Land in Ancient Eretz Israel: A Collection of Articles*, eds. Aryeh Kasher, et al. (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 1986): 49–56.

Magen Broshi, "Methodology of Population Estimate: The Roman Byzantine Period as a Case Study," in Magen Broshi, *Bread Wine, Walls and Scrolls* (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 86–93.

4 Broshi (above, note 3), 452, 455.

5 See, for example, Avi-Yonah (above, note 2), 25.

wide as the span of arms outstretched. He did not permit them to be buried.⁶

The main difficulty in this source, besides its mythical or folklorist character and the fact that the cruel figure of Hadrian, the suppressor of the revolt, stands at the center of the description, is the exaggerated numbers that are given by the author: eighty thousand Roman trumpet-blowing soldiers surrounded Bethar, which is also the number of those killed in Bethar. Since the numbers are typological, we cannot determine the number of the slain in Bethar in particular or during the course of the revolt in general.⁷ In his description of the results of the revolt and the killing and extensive destruction that accompanied its suppression, Eusebius noted an unspecified number: "He (Rufus) destroyed in heaps thousands of men, women and children, and, under the law of war, enslaved their land."⁸ According to this quotation, it is difficult to indicate the number of the slain.

The claim for the demographic change that occurred within the country as a result of the revolt is based mainly on the words of Cassius Dio: "Fifty of their most important outposts and nine hundred and eighty-five of their most famous villages were razed to the ground. Five hundred and eighty thousand men were slain in the various raids and battles, and the number of those that perished by famine, disease and fire was past finding out. Thus nearly the whole of Judaea was made desolate, a result of which the people had had forewarning before the war . . . Many Romans, moreover, perished in this war."⁹

The concluding words of Cassius Dio present the destructive outcome of the Second Revolt for both warring sides, but mainly stress the Jewish losses in lives and property. My previous discussion of this source and my conclusions oblige us to treat with extreme care the numerical figures that are presented by

6 *TJ Ta'anot*, 4: 8, 68d. Translation, Rubenstein 59.

"א"ר יוחנן קול אדריינוס קיסר הורג בביתר שמונים אלף ריבוא. א"ר יוחנן שמונים אלף זוג של תוקעי קרנות היו מקיפין את ביתר וכל אחד ואחד היה ממונה על כמה חילות והיה שם בן כוזבה והיה לו מאתים אלף מטיפי אצבע. והיו הורגין בהם והולכין עד ששקע הסוס בדם עד חוטמו והיה הדם מגלגל סלעים משאוי מ' סאה עד שהלך הדם בים ארבעת מיל אם תאמר שהיא קריבה לים והלא רחוקה מן הים ארבעים מיל אמרו כרם גדול היה לאדריינוס הרשע שמונה עשר מיל על שמונה עשר מיל כמן טיבריא לציפורי והקיפו גדר מהרוגי ביתר מלא קומה ופישו ידים ולא גזר עליהם שיקברו עד שעמד מלך אחר וגזר עליהם שיקברו."

For parallels see Midrash Rabba Lamentations 2.2, 4.

7 Schäfer, 162.

8 Eusebius, *HE*, 4.6. 4.

9 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 69:14.

Cassius Dio, since he is attempting to justify the great losses on the Roman side by describing the enormous losses of the Jewish rebels.¹⁰

The three types of sources exaggerate the numbers of slain Jews who fell during the revolt, while describing the results of the killing. The absence of the data and the lack of certainty regarding the size of the Jewish settlements, makes it difficult for us to give credibility to the claims of Cassius Dio that “nearly the whole of Judaea was made desolate . . .” Estimation of the number of killed in relation to the population in the country must be based on entirely different data, as will be seen.

In addition to the number of those killed during the revolt, the researchers who claimed that a demographic change occurred in the Land of Israel found support from the figures of Jewish war captives, many of whom were sold into slavery,¹¹ as mentioned in the words of Hieronymus and in the *Chronicon Pascale*:

1. “in the final captivity under Hadrian when the city of Jerusalem was overthrown, innumerable people of diverse ages and both sexes were sold at the marketplace of Terebinthus. For this reason it is an accursed thing among the Jews to visit this acclaimed marketplace.”¹²
2. “In Abraham’s dwelling place, where every year a famous market takes place, after the last destruction caused by Hadrian, thousands of people were sold there. Those who could not be sold were transferred to Egypt, they were lost either when their ships drowned or by the swords of the gentiles.”¹³
3. “Hadrian went to Jerusalem and captured the Jews, and led them to the market at Terebinthus, and sold each of them for the price of a daily portion of food for a horse. The others he led to Gaza where he established a market to sell them there. To this very day the market there is called the Hadrian market.”¹⁴

10 See above, 328.

11 See Werner Eck, “Sklassen und Freigelassene von Römern in Iudaea und den angrenzenden Provinzen,” *Novum Testamentum* 55 (2013): 1–21.

12 Hieronymus, *In Jeremiam*, VI, 31 (PL. T. 24 Col 911). Translated by M. Graves; Jerome, *Commentary on Jeremiah* (Downers Grove Ill. 2011), 194.

13 Idem, *In Zachariam*, III 11 (PL T. 25 col 1500).

14 *Chronicon Paschale* I, p. 474 (L. Dindorf, ed.). See also Arie Kofsky, “Mamre: A Case of a Regional Cult?,” in *Sharing the Sacred: Religious Contacts and Conflicts in the Holy Land, First–Fifteenth Centuries CE.*, eds. Arie Kofsky, Guy G. Stroumsa (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 1998): 19–30.

Although Jewish sources concerning the Second Revolt contain no direct references to captives taken by Hadrian and sold as slaves in these market fairs or in the one in Gaza,¹⁵ in the opinion of Oppenheimer, the discussion in the period of Usha on the issue of the redemption of captives verifies the Christian sources.¹⁶ Even these testimonies of thousands of captives sold as slaves are difficult to accept as reliable historical evidence for the same reasons noted above with regard to the number of the slain.¹⁷ Some scholars attributed the change in name from *Provincia Judaea* to *Provincia Syria-Palaestina* as indicating a demographic change in which the Jewish population had become a minority in the Land of Israel,¹⁸ and that it was intended to eliminate all memory of Judaea and Jews from the official name of the country.¹⁹

Previously I established that the Roman government of *Provincia Judaea* made administrative changes after nearly every uprising against it and that these changes were usually meant to make Roman rule more efficient in the rebellious area. The changes were quite often perceived as punitive measures. It was previously thought that in the aftermath of the Second Revolt, these measures included stationing of a second legion in the province, in Kefar Othnai, and the elevation of its status to the level of a consular province.²⁰ However, in view of new evidence, it seems that the status of the province had already been changed in 117 CE after the suppression of the War of Quietus,²¹ and no significant change can be found to have been made to the status of the province after the uprising of the Jews in 132 CE.

From a military diploma dated to 139 CE, it appears that besides the two permanent legions stationed in the province, *Legio VI Ferrata* in Kefar Othnai and *Legio X Fretensis* in Jerusalem, there were fifteen auxiliary units that included three cavalry squadrons and twelve cohorts. This force was an accepted

15 W. Bacher, "Der Jahrmarkt an der Terebinthe bei Hebron," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 29 (1909): 148–152; Shmuel Kraus, "Der Jahrmarkt von Batnan," *Ibid.*, 294–311.

16 See Oppenheimer, "Bar Kokhba Revolt," 27; Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 643–646.

17 Gideon Fuks, "Where Have All the Freedmen Gone? On an Anomaly in the Jewish Grave-inscriptions from Rome," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 36 (1985): 25–32.

18 See Yeivin, 126.

19 Applebaum, "Results," 258; idem, "Tineius Rufus and Julius Severus," in *Judaea in Hellenistic and Roman Times: Historical and Archaeological Essays*, (Leiden: Brill, 1989): 117–123. Applebaum's conclusion, based on an inscription found near Netanya, that the name change of the province had already occurred in 134 CE, is not acceptable.

20 See for example, Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 649.

21 See above, 74.

addition in the military system, with the aim of adjusting the size of the military forces to the area of the province.²²

I argued above that the activities of Hadrian in Provincia Judaea were designed to integrate it and its Jewish population within his Pan-Hellenic policy that was intended as a means towards the unification of the Roman Empire.²³ Indeed, one of his first acts in the realization of this aim after the suppression of the Second Revolt was the renewal of his plan to turn Jerusalem into a Roman *colony*, Aelia Capitolina, and settle a foreign population within it. Christian sources describe the establishment of Aelia Capitolina and stress the prohibition laid down by Hadrian against Jews living in the city or staying in it.²⁴ Eusebius, quoting Ariston of Pella, who was living at the time of the revolt, noted that: "Hadrian then commanded that by a legal decree and ordinances the whole nation should be absolutely prevented from entering from thenceforth even the district round Jerusalem, so that it could not even see from a distance its ancestral home.

Ariston of Pella tells the following story: Thus when the city came to be bereft of the nation of the Jews, and its ancient inhabitants had completely perished, it was settled by foreigners, and the Roman city which afterwards arose changed its name, and in honor of the reigning emperor Aelius Hadrian was called Aelia.²⁵

In reference to the prohibition of permanent residence of the Jews in the city, Eusebius said that apparently among those banished were also some Jewish Christians: "The Church, too, it was composed of gentiles, and after the Jewish bishops the first who appointed to minister to those was Marcus."²⁶

Similar descriptions appear in the commentary of Hieronymus to biblical verses:

However, to this very day, the unfaithful servants are forbidden to enter to Jerusalem, because they had killed God's servants and even the son of God. They are allowed to come to the city only to weep for her, and they pay with money to weep for the ruins of their city.²⁷

22 For our review of the diploma, see above 311–316.

23 See above, 105–111.

24 For the collection of the Christian sources, see Rendel J. Harris, "Hadrian Decree of Expulsion of the Jews from Jerusalem," *Harvard Theological Review* 19 (1926): 199–206.

25 Eusebius, *HE*, 4:6.

26 Eusebius, *HE*, 5:12.

27 Hieronymus, *In Saponiam*, 1 (PL T. 25, col. 1354).

Linder believed that one should not suspect the Christian sources of a one-sided attitude towards the Jews,²⁸ and claimed that the prohibitions of Hadrian were meant to “ensure the completely pagan character of Aelia Capitolina by its total detachment from Judaism and the prevention of the possibility of its rehabilitation as a Jewish Jerusalem.”²⁹ In his view, the prohibition was in force until the third century and the beginning of the fourth century. But I do not accept Linder’s argument against viewing these sources as one-sided in their attitude toward Judaism. The interpretative nature of the testimonies that attribute the fate of the Jews first by divine decree and then by the decree of Hadrian,³⁰ places their historical value in question.³¹ The conclusions of Rokeah that the Jews themselves refrained from visiting the city and that this is in fact the basis for the descriptions in the Christian sources³² clearly reflect the deep affront this caused to the feelings of most of the Jewish population at the erection of a pagan military colony in their capital—at the site of their sacred temple. There were some, however, who did not reconcile themselves to the bitter reality and settled within the city area, for example, that group of sages who, at the end of the second century, composed the “Holy Community of Jerusalem.”³³ The establishment of Aelia Capitolina as a pagan *colonia* should not be interpreted as a punitive measure, mainly because the plan for its erection preceded the Second Revolt and was one of its incentives. The background for its establishment was mainly a political one, and it should not be given a religious interpretation.

28 Amnon Linder, “The Roman Imperial Government and the Jews under Constantine,” *Tarbiz* 44 (1975): 136–140 [in Hebrew].

29 Linder, 138. Avi-Yonah (above, note 2), 38. Schürer, I, 553–554.

30 Eusebius, *Chronicle Hadrian, year 18*: “From that time on, the permission was denied them even to enter Jerusalem; first and foremost because of the commandment of God, as the prophets had prophesied; and secondly by the authority of the interdictions of the Romans.”

31 Shmuel Krauss, “Did Hadrianus prohibit Jews to enter Jerusalem,” *Yediót* 4 (1935): 52–60 [in Hebrew]; David Rokeah, “Comments on the Revolt of Bar Kokhba,” *Tarbiz* 22 (1966): 122–125 [in Hebrew].

32 Rokeah, 125.

33 Shmuel Safrai, “The Holy Assembly of Jerusalem,” *Zion* 22 (1957): 183–194 [in Hebrew]; Ben-Zion Luria, “Did the Jews Go on Pilgrimage to Jerusalem or Settle There after the Bar Kokhba Revolt?,” *Beth Mikra* 19 (1975): 309–336 [in Hebrew].

6.2 Religious Consequences

After the suppression of the revolt, Hadrian imposed nineteen decrees in addition to the decree prohibiting circumcision. These decrees prohibited the observance of various commandments,³⁴ and were listed by Alon in a number of categories. Some of them related to the existence of Jewish courts of law and the Jewish judicial system, since it was forbidden to appoint Torah scholars as judges. Other decrees related to public gatherings, which led to the closure of synagogues and a ban against public Torah study, as well as explicit decrees concerning religion.³⁵

In Alon's view, the sources describing the above decrees are reliable, but he did not think the decrees were promulgated for religious reasons in particular. First, the initiative for the decrees did not come from the emperor; they came from the local governor, who issued them by his power of *coercitio*, which was decreed in relation to the political situation created by Jewish-Roman confrontations. According to Alon, national-religious rights were denied the Jews of Judaea after the revolt, and as rebels against imperial authority, their status was that of the subjugated (*dediticii*).

Roman subjects, including the subjugated ones among them, enjoyed the right to set up an independent judicial system alongside the Roman provincial system; but the granting of this right was under the control of the local governor, who denied it to the Jews after the revolt. This was also the way in which Alon interpreted the revocation by the local governor of the right to hold gatherings and the explicit decrees against the observance of religious commandments. These decrees were also politically motivated and caused by political circumstances. Their imposition was not intended to annihilate the Jewish religion,³⁶ but was "meant to uproot national life, and especially the unique public-cultural aspects of the people in the country in order to deprive it to a decisive degree of its strength and its institutional solidarity in adherence to the Torah and the commandments."³⁷ In any case, even if these decrees

34 For a detailed discussion on the persecution, see Moshe D. Herr, "Persecutions and Martyrdom in Hadrian Days," *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 23 (1972): 85–120; Saul Lieberman, "Persecution of Jewish Religion," in *Salo Baron Jubilee Volume*, For his Eightieth Birthday, ed. Arthur Hyman (New York: ha-Akadeemyah ha-Amerikanit le-Mad'e ha-Yahadut, 1975): 214–234 [in Hebrew].

35 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 635–637.

36 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 636; Yeivin, 123.

37 Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 636.

were imposed for political reasons, as Alon argued, and were attempts to injure Jewish independent leadership and Jewish nationalism, they were merely passing phenomena as results of the revolt. These prohibitions were already cancelled during the reign of Antoninus Pius, Hadrian's successor. Moreover, the people learned how to cope with prohibitions and decrees. Outstanding evidence for this is the decision that was passed in the upper chamber of the house of Nitza in Lod: "By a majority vote, it was resolved in the upper chambers of the house of Nitza in Lydda that in every [other] law of the Torah, if a man is commanded: 'Transgress and suffer not death' he may transgress and not suffer death, excepting idolatry, incest, [which includes adultery] and murder. Now may not idolatry be practised [in these circumstances]? Has it not been taught: R. Ishmael said: Whence do we know that if a man was bidden, 'Engage in idolatry and save your life,' that he should do so, and not be slain?"³⁸

A few of the sages in that period pretended to reconcile themselves to the decrees³⁹ for practical reasons and from a realistic perspective. An example of this perspective can be found in the words of Rabbi Jose b. Kisma addressed to Rabbi Haninah b. Teradion, who adamantly refused to accept the decrees and gathered groups together to teach Torah to them: "Our Rabbis taught: When R. Jose b. Kisma was ill, R. Haninah b. Teradion went to visit him. He said to him: 'Brother Haninah, knowest thou not that it is Heaven that has ordained this [Roman] nation to reign? For though she laid waste His House, burnt His Temple, slew His pious ones and caused His best ones to perish, still is she firmly established!'"⁴⁰

I believe these words indicate the continued confrontation between the different factions in Judaism that had emerged many years before the suppression of the Second Revolt. The views of Rabbi Jose b. Kisma seem to correspond to

38 *TB* Sanhedrin, 74:1.

א"ר יוחנן משום ר"ש בן יהוצדק נימנו וגמרו בעליית בית נתזה בלוד כל עבירות שבתורה אם אומרין לאדם עבור ואל תהרג יעבור ואל יהרג חוץ מעבודת כוכבים וגילוי עריות ושפיכות דמים ועבודת כוכבים לא והא תניא א"ר ישמעאל מנין שאם אמרו לו לאדם עבוד עבודת כוכבים ואל תהרג מנין שיעבוד ואל יהרג

See also *TJ*, Sanhedrin, 3:6: "They then brought up Rabbi Haninah ben Teradion and asked him: 'Why hast thou occupied thyself with the Torah? He replied: 'Thus the Lord my God commanded me' At once they sentenced him to be burnt, his wife to be slain and his daughter to consigned to a brothel."

39 Herr (above, note 34), 85.

40 *TB*, Avoda Zara, 18:

תנו רבנן כשחלה רבי יוסי בן קיסמא הלך רבי חנינא בן תרדיון לבקרו אמר לו חנינא אחי! אתה יודע שאומה זו מן השמים מליכה שהחריבה את ביתו ושרפה את היכלו והרגה את חסידיו ואיבדה את טוביו ועדיין היא קיימת."

the position of Josephus and those like him toward the Romans, as expressed in the words he cites in the name of Agrippa II:

The only refuge, then, left to you, is divine assistance. But even this is ranged on the side of the Romans, for, without God's aid, so vast an empire could never have been built up.⁴¹

Rabbi Jose b. Kisma had hoped for an early salvation and linked it with a conquest of the Land of Israel by the Parthians.⁴² But the situation that prevailed after the suppression of the Second Revolt, when the Romans increased their supervision over the population that had tried to free themselves from their oppression and failed, forced him to take a new and more realistic view of the political realities. He explained why it was necessary for religious reasons to be reconciled with Roman rule for the time being and with the situation in the country after the suppression. His colleague, Rabbi Haninah b. Teradion was opposed to this view. Herr wrote about him: "What did Rabbi Haninah b. Teradion see that caused him, not without reason, to be considered as an archetype of the martyrs in the generation of the destruction?—It seems that he well understood the significance of the decrees and foretold what others understood only much later, since only a few years later the decrees were annulled. But their results were not entirely eliminated."⁴³

41 *JW*, 2: 391–398.

42 *TB* Sanhedrin, 98: 1–2.

"The disciples of R. Jose b. Kisma asked him, 'When will the Messiah come?' He answered, 'I fear lest ye demand a sign of me [that my answer is correct]. They assured him, 'We will demand no sign of you.' So he answered them, 'When this gate falls down, is rebuilt, falls again, and is again rebuilt, and then falls a third time, before it can be rebuilt the son of David will come.' They said to him, 'Master, give us a sign.' He protested, 'Did ye not assure me that ye would not demand a sign?' They replied, 'Even so, [we desire one]. He said to them: 'If so, let the waters of the grotto of Paneas turn into blood,' and they turned into blood. When he lay dying he said to them: 'Place my coffin deep [in the earth], for there is not one palm–tree in Babylon to which a Persian horse will not be tethered, nor one coffin in Palestine out of which a Median horse will not eat straw."

"שאלו תלמידיו את רבי יוסי בן קיסמא אימתי בן דוד בא אמר מתירא אני שמא תבקשו ממני אות אמרו לו אין אנו מבקשין ממך אות א"ל לכשיפול השער הזה ויבנה ויפול ויבנה ויפול ואין מספיקין לבנותו עד שכן דוד בא אמרו לו רבינו תן לנו אות אמר להם ולא כך אמרתם לי שאין אתם מבקשין ממני אות אמרו לו ואף על פי כן אמר להם אם כך יהפכו מי מערת פמיס לדם ונהפכו לדם בשעת פטירתו אמר להן העמיקו לי ארוני כל דקל ודקל שבבבל שאין סוס של פריסיים נקשר בו ואין לך כל ארון וארון שבארץ ישראל שאין סוס מדי אוכל בו תבן"

43 Herr (above, note 34), 87.

Even without comparing these words with what Alon said about the reasons for the decrees, the remarks of Herr are worth comparing with the facts and events after their annulment. Those decrees to which Rabbi Haninah b. Teradion was opposed were the direct result of the Second Revolt and not of the random whims of the Roman authorities. Therefore, the stand taken by Rabbi Haninah b. Teradion was certainly not the way to solve the continued confrontation between Judaea and Rome. This position did not help and only sharpened the prolonged conflict. By contrast, it was the approach of Rabbi Jose b. Kisma that actually became the predominant one, and this is proved by the rapid recovery of Judaism in the Land of Israel after the annulment of the decrees. The background for the recovery was the attempt to be reconciled to Roman rule and the readiness of the Jews to adopt a passive attitude toward it, as may be understood from the following passage in the Babylonian Talmud: "R. Jose son of R. Haninah who said: 'What was the purpose of those three adjurations?—One, that Israel shall not go up [all together as if surrounded] by a wall; the second, that whereby the Holy One, blessed be He, adjured Israel that they shall not rebel against the nations of the world; and the third is that whereby the Holy One, blessed be He, adjured the idolaters that they shall not oppress Israel too much.'"⁴⁴

The passive stance vis-à-vis Roman rule was one of the outcomes of the failure of the Second Revolt. This failure was followed by a radical change in the world outlook of the Jews of that period concerning the messianic idea in general and the Messiah in particular. As previously seen, two ideologies were held at that time on this subject: one that believed it was possible to hasten the redemption, to be free of Roman rule, by a real and national Messiah who would bring about national and political freedom; and the other that believed in the advent of the last anointed king of the House of David who would appear in apocalyptic times.⁴⁵ After the failure of the Bar Kokhba revolt, this second approach became the dominant one, and there is no doubt that the postponement of redemption to the end of days made reconciliation with Roman rule much easier.

44 *TB*, Ketuboth, 111a אחת הללו למה אחת *ההוא מיבעי ליה לכדרי יוסי ברבי חנינא דאמר ג' שבועות הללו למה אחת* "ההוא מיבעי ליה לכדרי יוסי ברבי חנינא דאמר ג' שבועות הללו למה אחת" *שלא יעלו ישראל בחומה ואחת שהשביע הקדוש ברוך הוא את ישראל שלא ימרדו באומות העולם ואחת שהשביע הקדוש ברוך הוא את העובדי כוכבים שלא ישתעבדו בהן בישראל יותר מדיא*; See Alon, *Jews in Their Land*, 642.

45 See above, 404–412.

6.3 Socio-economic Results

One of the serious results that scholars have attributed to the Second Revolt was the economic crisis that affected the country after the destruction of the settlements and because of the tax burdens imposed by the Romans after the revolt.⁴⁶ The claim regarding the destruction of settlements is mainly based on the description by Cassius Dio of the course that the suppression of the revolt had taken:

Fifty of their most important outposts and nine hundred and eighty five of their most famous villages were razed to the ground.⁴⁷

Earlier in this book, I dealt with the words of Cassius Dio and established that all the attempts to verify the extent of settlement destruction do not meet critical standards. First, it is not clear if the testimony of Cassius on the destruction of outposts and the many village settlements are related to the entire area of Provincia Judaea or only to those in which the revolt had spread.⁴⁸ His figures are exaggerated, even if they relate to the whole province and all the more so if he was referring only the areas of the revolt. Taking into account the limited area of the revolt, the inflated testimony of Cassius does not contribute anything to knowledge of the settlement situation or the extent of the destruction after the suppression of the revolt. Thus, no estimation of the result of the revolt concerning settlements can be made only on the basis of the figures given by Cassius Dio. Hence, I will examine other sources of reliable testimony and archaeological finds that might inform us about the settlement situation in the Land of Israel after the suppression of the revolt.

The punitive measures against the Jewish population should not be seen as a collective punishment by the Emperor because in the days following the Great Revolt, the Romans penalized mainly those who had taken an active part in the rebellion. Therefore, the areas in which the population did not participate in the revolt did not suffer during its suppression, while the areas that were actively involved in the revolt were either destroyed or suffered retributive punishment by the Romans who regarded their inhabitants as rebels.

46 See Aharon Oppenheimer, "The Revolt of Bar Kokhba: Ideology and Modern Scholarship," in *Between Rome and Babylon*, 224. On the Jewish settlements in Galilee after the Revolt, see Uzi Leibner, *Settlement and History in the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Galilee* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009): 307–345.

47 Cassius Dio, 69:14.

48 See above, 328.

In view of this, it is not surprising at all that the Galilee, which had not taken part in the revolt, hardly suffered during the revolt and suffered no damage when it ended.⁴⁹ Evidence for this is seen from the fact that the Galilee region became the main Jewish center in the country in which many of the war refugees found safe haven.⁵⁰ Besides this, the restoration of Jewish leadership institutions in the Galilee is an indication that the region did not suffer at all from the religious decrees that had been imposed after the revolt. If the decrees had been meant to annihilate the national existence of the Jewish people, why did the Romans allow the Jews in the Galilee to restore the leadership institutions there? The sources, however, do describe the beginnings of the activities for restoring the leadership institutions in the Galilee against the background of the dire decrees:

TB Sanhedrin 13b–14a:

Rab Judah say in Rab's name . . . once the wicked Government, [as an act of religious persecution], decreed that whoever performed an ordination should be put to death, And whoever received ordination should be put to death, the city in which the ordination took place demolished, and the boundaries wherein it had been performed, uprooted. What did R. Judah b. Baba do? He went and sat between two great mountains, [that lay] between two large cities; between the Sabbath boundaries of the cities of Usha and Shefaram and there ordained five elders . . . As soon as their enemies discovered them he [R.J.b.B.] urged them: "My children, flee." They said to him, "What will become of thee, Rabbi?" "I lie before them like a stone which none [is concerned to] overturn," he replied. It was said that the enemy did not stir from the spot until they had driven three hundred iron spear-heads into his body, making it like a sieve.⁵¹

49 For research on the possible sources describing the damage in Galilee during and after the revolt and the rejection of these sources, see above, 155–160.

50 For a detailed review, see Aharon Oppenheimer, "The Restoration of the Jewish Settlement in Galilee," in *Eretz Israel from the Destruction of the Second Temple*, 75–92; Urbach, "From Judah to Galilee," 59. See also Zeev Safrai, "The Bar Kokhva Revolt and Its Effect on Settlement," in *Bar Kokhva Revolt: A New Approach*, 182–214; He claimed that there is no evidence for the strengthening of the Galilean settlements. However, it is difficult to accept this claim.

51 *TB Sanhedrin*, 13:2–14:1:

"אמר רב יהודה אמר רב . . . שפעם אחת גזרה מלכות הרשעה גזירה על ישראל שכל הסומך יהרג וכל הנסמך יהרג, ועיר שסומכין בה תיחרב ותחומין שסומכין בהן יעקרו, מה עשה יהודה בן בבא הלך וישב לו בין שני הרים גדולים ובין שתי עיירות גדולות ובין שני תחומי שבת בין אושא לשפרעם וסמך שם חמשה זקנים . . . כיוון שהכירו אויביהם בהן אמר להן בני רוצו; אמרו לו:

This source describes the renewal of the rabbinical ordination procedure in the Galilee area between Usha and Shefaram in violation of the decree against ordination. But since this source is anachronistic in nature and is not a reliable historical source,⁵² it cannot be deduced from it that the decrees were applied to the Galilee region. The following source describes the first stage of the reinstatement of leadership institutions in Usha: "At the end of the great persecution, our teachers met together at Usha, namely Rabbi Judah, Rabbi Nehemiah, Rabbi Meir, Rabbi Yose, Rabbi Simeon bar Yohai, Rabbi Eliezer son of Rabbi Yose the Galilean, and Rabbi Eliezer ben Jacob. They sent to the Elders of the Galilee saying, 'Whoever has learned, let him come and teach; and whoever has not learned, let him come and learn.' They came together and studied and took all necessary steps."⁵³

This source, which describes the founding assembly for the revival of leadership in Usha and for making it the center of Jewish authority, does not indicate any limitation associated with the prohibition decrees. The claim that one of the reasons for choosing Usha, which was not a central city in the Galilee, as the center for the leadership was because of the desire of the sages not to arouse Roman wrath,⁵⁴ is not acceptable. If the Romans were opposed to the renewal of Jewish leadership, they would have prevented it, whether in a small city or a large one. The prior discussion explained that even after the Great Revolt, the Romans preferred—as in all periods of their rule in Judaea—to allow for the installation of local leadership that would on one hand represent the Jewish population and on the other hand cooperate with the local Roman authorities.⁵⁵

Because the population of the Galilee did not participate in the revolt, it was granted certain advantages by the Roman authorities. In the central cities of the Galilee, Tiberias and Sepphoris, the Jews who had collaborated with the

רבי מה תהא עליך, אמר להם: הריני מוטל לפניהם כאבן שאין לה הופכים; אמרו, לא וזו משם עד שנעצו בו שלש מאות לונביאות של ברזל ועשאוהו ככברה.

See, for a parallel tradition: *TB*, *Avoda Zara*, 8:2.

52 For a review of the source, see Oppenheimer (above, note 50), 79.

53 Trans. Maurice Simon, New York: Soncino Press, 1983 (3rd ed.), 106.

Midrash Rabba, *Song of Songs*, 2, 16:

"בשלפי השמד נתכנסו רבותינו לאושא, ואלו הן: רבי יהודה ורבי נחמיה, רבי מאיר ורבי יוסי ורבי שמעון בן יוחאי ורבי אליעזר בנו של רבי יוסי הגלילי ורבי אליעזר בן יעקב. שלחו אצל זקני הגליל ואמרו: כל מי שהוא למד יבוא וילמד, וכל מי שאינו למד יבוא וילמד; נתכנסו ולמדו ועשו כל צרכיהו."

trans. Maurice Simon, New York: Soncino Press, 1983 (3rd ed.), 106.

54 Oppenheimer (above, note 46), 81.

55 See for example above, 55–56.

Romans were rejected by the Galilean population; and therefore, it is not reasonable to suppose that the Romans would have chosen them for the Jewish leadership. On the other hand, the leadership that began to be consolidated in Usha was not linked with the Second Revolt and was acceptable to the Jewish population as well as to the Romans.

In this regard, note that among the reasons that Oppenheimer listed for the selection of Usha as the seat of Jewish leadership was the fact that it was the city in which Rabbi Judah resided and that he held a positive attitude toward the Roman authorities and was, in turn, acceptable to them as well.⁵⁶ Similarly, we have to take into account the omission of the name of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel from the early stages of the renewed leadership in Usha. Since he was a participant in the Second Revolt⁵⁷ and suspect in Roman eyes, he was not included in the act of restitution in order not to endanger him. Only after some time, when calmer spirits prevailed, did he manage to establish his position within the Usha leadership by virtue of being the son of Rabban Gamliel of Yavne, and then, he was given the title of Nasi, although his relations with the Roman authorities were limited.⁵⁸

Another matter in relation to the part played by the Galilee region in the rehabilitation of Judaism after the Bar Kokhba Revolt is the question "if and when were the priestly courses (Mishmarot) transferred from Judaea to the Galilee?" This issue was given renewed attention in recent years. Dalia Trifon, who reopened the discussion, dated the expansion of Jewish settlement in the Galilee, including the priests, to the second half of the third century CE.⁵⁹ However, I have adopted the dating of Ze'ev Safrai who claimed that the transfer of the priests from Judaea to the Galilee occurred in the aftermath of the Bar Kokhba revolt, despite Safrai's opinion that preserving the framework of

56 Oppenheimer (above, note 50), 81–82.

57 For a study about the dwelling of the Nasi's family in Bethar, according to the following sources: *TJ* Ta'aniot, 4, 9, 1; *TB* Gittin 58: 1. see David Goodblatt, "Did the Tana'im Support Bar-Kokhba," *Cathedra* 29 (1983): 7. He fully rejects this evidence. On the other hand, Ben Shalom approaches these sources as reliable and as evidence for Rabban Shimeon Ben Gamliel's full approval of the revolt. See Israel Ben Shalom, "The Support of the Sages for Bar-Kokhba's Revolt," *Cathedra* 29 (1983): 21.

58 Oppenheimer (above, note 50), 84; Urbach, "From Judaea to Galilee," 70, notes, "We do not find Rabban Simeon son of Gamliel, and it seems that because of caution matters he was not present at the first assembly in Usha."

59 Dalia Trifon, "Did the Priestly Courses (Mishmarot) Transfer from Judaea to Galilee after the Bar Kokhba Revolt?," *Tarbiz* 59 (1989): 77–93 [in Hebrew].

the priestly courses expressed “mainly the hope for the renewal of the priestly functions.”⁶⁰

The most detrimental situation, from which the Galilee did not suffer, was that of the *sikarikon* laws⁶¹ associated with the confiscation of lands by the Romans after the suppression of the Second Revolt.⁶² These laws were laid down in order to prevent the loss of land ownership after the lands had been confiscated by the Roman authorities and were auctioned for sale. These lands could be acquired only with the agreement of their original owners. In the *sikarikon* laws, a clear distinction was made between the Galilee and Judaea: “In earlier times they decided on a persecution in Judea . . . The original owners could come and repossess; therefore the land was left absolutely in the hand of the *sikarikon* since they refrained from buying. They decreed that the law of *sikarikon* should not apply in Yehudah . . . The law of *sikarikon* always applies in Galilee.”⁶³

The distinction between Judaea and the Galilee on the issue of the application of the *sikarikon* laws is explained by the fact that many tracts of land in Judaea were confiscated; while in the Galilee, which had not taken part in the revolt and was therefore not punished, no lands were confiscated. In the Galilee, they continued to strictly observe the *sikarikon* laws, while these laws—that limited the free acquisition of land—were annulled in Judaea as a result of the confiscations. The annulment was explained as being in the national interest since “the law concerning the uprising occupant did not apply in Judah due to the settlement of the State.”⁶⁴

Land confiscation in Judaea was part of the suppression of the revolt policy of the Romans and punishment for the rebels. But the very claim that the *sikarikon* laws were annulled for settlement purposes seems to indicate that Jews continued to reside in Judaea even after the Second Revolt.⁶⁵ There is no doubt that this area suffered the severest damage from the suppression of

60 Zeev Safrai, “Response: Did the Priestly Courses (Mishmarot) Transfer from Judaea to Galilee after the Bar Kokhba Revolt?,” *Tarbiz* 62 (1992): 287–292 [in Hebrew]. See also, more recently: Uzi Leibner, 405–408.

61 See above, 82–85.

62 Eusebius, *HE*, 6, 1.

63 *TJ* Gittin, 5, 7b, Translated by Heinrich W. Guggenheimer, Tractates, Gittin & Nazir, (Berlin Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 227. See above, 83–84.

64 *Toseftah*, Gittin, 5, 1.

65 See Zeev Safrai (above, note 50), 63; Joshua Schwartz, “Judea in the Wake of the Bar Kokhva Revolt,” in *Bar Kokhva Revolt: A New Approach*, 215–223; idem, “The Jewish Settlement in Judaea and the Southern Shore Regions during the Third and Fourth Centuries,” in *Eretz Israel from the Destruction of the Second Temple*, 180–181; and his detailed book: Schwartz

the revolt. Settlements in Judaea, such as Herodion and Bethar, had already been destroyed during the course of the revolt, and Jews were expelled from the districts of Gophna, Herodion, and Aqraba.⁶⁶ However, it should not be claimed that the region of Judaea was completely destroyed. Jews continued to live in areas such as Lod (Lydda), south of the Hebron Mountain, and the coastal regions.⁶⁷ In other areas of the Land of Israel that did not have any direct connection with the Second Revolt, no settlement changes can be identified as resulting from it.⁶⁸ Therefore, there is no evidence that the Jews of the country were collectively punished; the main punitive measures were focused on the actual areas of the revolt, and even in those spheres these measures were limited.

To summarize this issue, I quote Avi-Yonah, who surveyed in detail the severe demographic and economic situation following the revolt under the title "Rebuilding of the Ruins." In spite of his harsh descriptions he summed up his discussion by saying that "at the same time, they also show that the number of Jews who remained were still fairly numerous because they constituted a significant force that the authorities had to consider."⁶⁹ And elsewhere he said, "Even after the Bar Kokhba war and the period of persecution, Jewish settlement in the country still remained numerous and of significant economic and military capability."⁷⁰

Joshua, *Jewish Settlement in Judaea: After the Bar-Kochba War until the Arab Conquest* (Jerusalem: Magness, 1986) [in Hebrew].

- 66 Boaz Zissu, *Rural Settlement in the Judean Hills and Foothills from the Late Second Period to the Bar Kokhba Revolt*, diss. The Hebrew University (Jerusalem: 2001). See, for example, the destiny of one village: Horvat 'Ethri, in B. Zissu, "Village Razed, Rebels Beheaded: How Hadrian Suppressed the Second Jewish Revolt at Horvat 'Ethri," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 33 (2007), 32–41; Boaz Zissu, Amir Ganor, "Horvat 'Ethri: A Jewish Village from the Second Temple Period and the Bar Kokhba Revolt in the Judean Foothills," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 60 (2009): 90–136.
- 67 Avi-Yonah (above, note 2), 21–23; Schwartz (above, note 65), 182–201, which reviews the Jewish settlements in the plain and the coastal cities.
- 68 Safrai (above, note 50) traced the layout of the settlements in the various regions of the country. Although he says that he found it difficult to determine whether the damage was the result of the Great Revolt or the Second Revolt, some of his findings are decisive. For example, in the coastal lowlands the evidence is not clear, and it seems that this region was only lightly damaged. But where is the evidence for this? And the same question can be asked regarding the Jezreel Valley, the Beth Shean Valley, and the Golan. Did these regions take an active part in the revolt to such an extent that the changes in these settlements can be associated with the results of the revolt?
- 69 Avi-Yonah (above, note 2), 25.
- 70 Avi-Yonah, 29.

Certainly, I cannot claim for certain that the suppression of the revolt did not injure the rebel population, but in view of the amazing recovery of the Jewish settlement in the country a short while afterwards, one should not regard the Bar Kokhba revolt as one of the direst catastrophes that had ever fallen upon the Jewish population in ancient times. This recovery is evident in nearly every sphere in which severe damage to the Jewish population was claimed to have been made, and it may be explained by the recognition and acceptance of Roman authority that enabled the Jewish people to continue with their lives under the institutions of Jewish leadership.

Epilogue

In the introduction to his book *Searching for Bar Kokhba*, Yadin wrote:

But when all the fragmentary tales and traces of Bar Kokhba were assembled they amounted to no more than the lineaments of a ghost. He figured in Jewish folklore more as a myth than a man of flesh and blood, as impersonal as a Hercules or a King Arthur. It was centuries of persecutions of the Jews and their yearning for national rehabilitation that turned Bar Kokhba into a people's hero—an elusive figure they clung to because he had demonstrated, and was the last to demonstrate, that the Jews could fight to win spiritual and political independence.¹

This kind of modern research on the Bar Kokhba revolt is known for its repeated attempts to present the last Jewish war against the Romans as one in which the Jews sallied forth to protect their spiritual freedom and to restore their political independence. It therefore tried to portray the population of Palestine on the eve the Second Revolt as being united around Pharisee Judaism, according to the School of Beth Hillel, and around the leadership of Bar Kokhba, who is represented in research as a national leader bestowed with the unconditional support of the sages, led by Rabbi Akiba, the spiritual leader of the revolt. The Second Revolt is described in the research literature as a planned revolt (rather than a spontaneous one), for which continuous preparations were made in the equipment of arms and the construction of hideout systems throughout the region of Judaea—and perhaps even outside it—for aggressive and defensive purposes. The intense force of the revolt was so great that the emperor himself participated in its suppression, and he was even compelled to send senior officers into the region under the command of Julius Severus and a huge army. It was only after a long struggle of three and one-half years, or perhaps four and one-half years, that the Romans managed to defeat it. The representation of the Bar Kokhba revolt in this light derives from the Jewish tradition that regards Bar Kokhba as a national hero, a symbol of the military ability of the Jews to fight for their religious and political freedom. Yet this portrayal, in my opinion, goes against historical truth as is presented in the fragmentary sources describing the Second Revolt. As I have shown, some of the elements in these sources are in total contradiction to the description of the Second Revolt in the research literature.

¹ Yadin, *Bar Kokhba*, 27.

The Second Revolt was focused mainly within a restricted area in the mountains of Judaea and the Hebron environs. Its leader was a local chieftain who had won his position through his charismatic qualities and his ability to unify the rebel factions, leading them into a prolonged revolt against the superior Roman forces. After the destruction of the Second Temple and the suppression of the Great Revolt, most of the leadership and the population understood that the continuous aspiration to preserve their unique culture and independence would not be achieved through the sword, and the period between the two revolts proved them to be justified. The Jews of Palestine recovered from the terrible events of the destruction mainly through their reconciliation with the Roman regime and their realization that, in those current conditions, they could preserve their full religious integrity and even win the right for a measure of limited independence.

Although in the War of Quietus, the Galilean population tried to revolt once more against Roman rule, the suppression of that war only strengthened those in power in the country who tended to compromise and be reconciled with the presence of the Roman authorities in Palestine. Despite the fact that the actions of Hadrian were of a political nature, their intention was not to bring about the elimination of Judaism, at least not according to Hadrian's perceptions. Some of the Jewish population in the Judaeian mountains regarded Roman conquest and the general policy of the emperor carried out by Tineius Rufus, the local governor, as sufficient cause for another revolt against Rome. Yet the territorial limitations of the Second Revolt testify that most of the Jewish population in Palestine did not regard these activities as a reason for rebellion. It may be that most of them tended toward their cancellation through negotiations with the emperor. As I previously established, even the religious decrees that were imposed after the revolt were limited in their range and duration, and the Jewish population eventually emerged from this event greatly strengthened and united.

The available evidence gives no indication of any national unity motivated by the desire to preserve its particularity or to achieve political independence. If, in the past, the conquest of Jerusalem, the restoration of the Temple, and the renewal of the sacrificial cult were regarded as the essential symbols of political independence and the preservation of religious identity, during the course of the Second Revolt, its leader, Bar Kokhba, preferred to renounce the conquest of Jerusalem mainly for purely military considerations. This, despite the inscriptions like *the freedom of Jerusalem* and symbols connected with the Temple on some of the coins of the revolt.

National unity is not mentioned at all in the sources concerning the revolt, and the support of the sages headed by Rabbi Akiba for the revolt is subject to

doubt. I asserted that at least one faction among the sages, perhaps not even in any connection with the Second Revolt, was opposed to a national attempt that would lead to the removal of Roman rule and the redemption of Israel. They preferred to postpone the redemption and to relegate it to the apocalyptic-eschatological framework of the end of days. It may also be assumed that, even in the limited territorial area of the revolt, not everyone was glad to join the rebels. In fact, in the letters from the Judean Desert there are hints about the deserters and truants from the camp of the fighters whom Bar Kokhba exhorted his officers in the area of Ein Gedi to arrest and transfer to his own camp.

In view of the aforementioned, it may be said that some of the scholars who dealt with the Second Revolt and regarded it, mainly by its outcome, as one of the events that changed the course of Jewish history in the ancient world, gave this revolt more historical importance than it deserved. Their approach, which sees the revolt as a symbol of the Jewish struggle for independence and its leader as a national hero, was entangled in more than a few distortions. In order to exemplify this, I will expand my discussion of the question regarding the relationship between the territorial extent of the revolt and the composition and strength of the Roman force that suppressed it. One of the counterarguments against the claim about the limited area to which the Second Revolt spread is based upon the large size of the Roman army that suppressed it. If the revolt was indeed confined to a small area, why was it necessary for the Romans to concentrate such large forces under the command of the most senior of their commanders in order to suppress it? Were the two legions stationed in Provincia Judaea not sufficient for this purpose?

I perceive this question as related to the attempt to present Bar Kokhba as a leader of the entire nation who unified serried ranks of Jewish fighters. Whoever described the leadership of Bar Kokhba in this way was obliged to present the Roman army as a mighty force that included large numbers of soldiers and that, despite its size, suffered heavy losses during the three and one-half (or four and one-half) years in Judaea until it succeeded in suppressing the uprising of the Jews.

The picture that emerges from the sources regarding the composition of the Roman army that fought in Judaea during the course of the Second Revolt is not clear at all. The only thing that can be known for certain about the Roman army in Provincia Judaea on the eve of the Second Revolt is that there were two legions stationed there, *Legio X Fretensis* and *Legio VI Ferrata*, supported by a limited number of auxiliary forces. Further details about the composition of the Roman army in Judaea are vague and are based on evidence that does not always clarify the issue. The attempts to aggrandize the Roman forces that fought in Judaea are double-sided. On one hand, they derive from the

intention of some scholars to glorify the names of the leader of the revolt and its fighters. The larger the number of units fighting against the Jewish rebels, and the greater the force of the Roman army, the more impressive the staying power of the Jewish opponents. In this regard, it is worth noting that the Jewish sources do not stress the numerical advantage of the Roman fighters and do not consider it as the cause for the failure of the revolt:

Rabbi Yohanan said, [the] voice (Gen 25:22) [this refers to]: Hadrian the Emperor killing eighty thousand myriads in Bethar. R. Yohanan said: Eighty thousand pairs of trumpet sounders besieged Bethar, and each one commanded a number of soldiers . . . They went about slaughtering them until a horse sunk in blood up to its nostrils, and the blood carried away boulders that weighted forty sela until it went four miles into the sea. If you should think that it (Bethar) was close to the sea, behold, it was forty miles distant from the sea. Hadrian the wicked had a great vineyard, eighteen miles by eighteen miles like as the distance from Tiberias to Sepphoris. He encircled it with the corpses from Bethar, piled [as high] as a man standing [and as wide as the span of arms outstretched. He did not permit them to be buried.²

On the other hand, for certain scholars who have examined the events of the revolt from the Roman viewpoint, it was precisely the extension of the rebel fighting areas to the entire province, the enlargement of the Roman army that had participated in the suppression of the revolt, and the presentation of heavy losses to the Roman army, that allowed them to explain why it took so long for the Romans to suppress the revolt. In the past, all the evidence that served to determine the composition of the Roman army was derived from inscriptions that did not clarify the matter unequivocally. Now it is not at all clear from these inscriptions whether the legion mentioned in the inscription found in the area of Judaea was present in the region in full force or if only a

² *TJ Ta'anit*, 4: 8, 68d. Translation by Rubenstein, 59.

א"ר יוחנן קול אדריינוס קיסר הורג בביתר שמונים אלף ריבוא. א"ר יוחנן שמונים אלף זוג של תוקעי קרנות היו מקיפין את ביתר וכל אחד ואחד היה ממונה על כמה חיילות והיה שם בן כוזבה והיה לו מאתים אלף מטיפי אצבע . . . והיו הורגין בהם והולכין עד ששקע הסוס בדם עד חוטמו והיה הדם מגלגל סלעים משאוי מ' סאה עד שהלך הדם בים ארבעת מיל אם תאמר שהיא קריבה לים והלא רחוקה מן הים ארבעים מיל אמרו כרם גדול היה לאדריינוס הרשע שמונה עשר מיל על שמונה עשר מיל כמן טיבריא לציפורי והקיפו גדר מהרוגי ביתר מלא קומה ופישוט ידים ולא גזר עליהם שיקברו עד שעמד מלך אחר וגזר עליהם שיקברו.

For parallels to *TJ*, *Taanit* 4:8, 68d, see; *Midrash Rabba*, *Lamentations* 2.2, 4.

few units of it took part in the war. It is also not clear from the inscriptions at what stage that legion or its units were present in Judaea. Even the attempts to glean information from military diplomas on the size and composition of the Roman army pose many difficulties.

I dealt in detail above with the Roman forces that had participated in the suppression of the revolt in Provincia Judaea, but for the sake of exemplification I will return to the two legions that were sent to reinforce the Roman army from the provinces of Arabia and Egypt. During the period of the Second Revolt, one legion only was stationed in Provincia Arabia, Legio III Cyrenaica. Epigraphical evidence from Judaea links this legion to the Second Revolt; and from military diplomas, it may be inferred that its commander, Haterius Nepos, was awarded military decorations of the highest degree for his part in the suppression of the Second Revolt. However, other evidence indicates that during the short period after Arabia had become a Roman province, it found it difficult to recruit soldiers to the legion itself and suffered unrest in the region of the Negev because of attacks by Bedouin tribes. In such a situation, would the emperor transfer the entire legion from Arabia to Judaea and leave the province exposed to Bedouin attacks and other incidents that could develop among the inhabitants of the province? The same question arises with regard to Egypt. In 123 CE, one legion alone was stationed in Egypt, Legio II Traiana. Because of the reduction of the permanent forces in Egypt a few years earlier and the stationing of only one legion, it does not seem reasonable that, in order to assist the Roman army in its war against the Jewish rebels, the emperor would leave Egypt without a legion. These two examples underscore that, in many cases in which it was claimed that entire legions participated in suppressing the revolt, the reference was merely to military squadrons; therefore, the attempt to measure the size of the Roman army in Judaea during the period of the revolt in accordance with the existing data is impossible. Another consideration is that the size of an army does not always correspond directly to the territorial extent of the revolt or to the area held under the control of the leader of the revolt.

In periods of peace and calm, the stationing of two legions in the area of Provincia Judaea makes it very clear that the size of the army does not indicate the size and extent of the province. From the beginning of the Roman conquest in 63 BCE until 6 CE, the time when Provincia Judaea was established, no Roman army was stationed there! It took the Romans nearly 70 years to assign the province a single legion, and about 120 years to add another legion to the province, even though the territorial extent of the region of the Roman conquest did not change at all for nearly two hundred years.

The military situation during the course of the Great Revolt could serve as an example of what occurred during the Second Revolt. The Great Revolt, which continued for a period of time similar to that of the Second Revolt, extended over a wide area that, in fact, included the entire province. To suppress this revolt, three legions were concentrated in Judaea, and after a while, during the siege of Jerusalem, four legions, to which squadrons and auxiliary units were added. The Second Revolt had a more limited territorial range, and the Galilee did not take part in it at all. The two permanent legions and their auxiliary forces had to defeat the rebels, but when this did not happen, the emperor Hadrian sent reinforcements to the army that was stationed permanently in Judaea.

Nevertheless, there is no reason to raise the number of Roman fighters who participated in the Second Revolt, which was limited in range, to an enormous figure that does not tally with the extent of the revolt. In the early stages of the revolt, the Romans suffered heavy losses since they did not adapt their fighting methods to the warfare tactics of the rebels. The change in the method of Roman warfare is connected with the arrival of Julius Severus to Judaea. Severus, who was experienced in mountain warfare, divided his units into many small forces that eliminated the nests of the rebels. And as it appears from the final stages of the revolt, its suppression was not because of the vast numbers of Roman fighters but was the result of adapting the methods of Roman warfare to those of the Jewish rebels. And again, the awarding of the *Ornamenta Triumphalia* to the three senior military commanders does not constitute evidence for the magnitude of the revolt: Julius Severus was the senior commander who arrived in Judaea from Britannia, and it was under his command that the uprising in the province was crushed. The other two who received decorations for their participation in the suppression of the revolt were Gaius Publicius Marcellus, the Governor of Syria, and Haterius Nepos, the Governor of Arabia.

The results of the revolt are another sphere in which a high degree of importance was attributed to the physical and spiritual changes that occurred among the Jews in Palestine in the aftermath of the Second Revolt. Applebaum, in summing up the Bar Kokhba war and its outcome, noted: "The question that is worth discussing is to what extent did the results of the war deter the Roman world from an additional attempt to destroy Judaism. It is possible that the revolt of the Jews under the command of Bar Kokhba, despite its heavy price, achieved this goal when the nation at that time found no other way."³

3 Applebaum, "Results," 260.

The question for discussion that Applebaum proposed clearly accords with the view that although the Second Revolt ended in complete failure, it was an achievement for the Jews since it led to a change in the position of the Romans toward the Jewish population and Judaism. But in my view, the change that occurred was not in the Roman position but in that of the Jews themselves. After many long years in which, time after time, various sections of the Jewish population tried to free themselves from the burden of Roman rule by military means, the failure of the Second Revolt finally brought about a renunciation of the military option for the preservation of religious and national integrity. In the wake of this failure, the Jewish population became more sober, and the expectancy of redemption and freedom from the burden of Rome turned from real expectations to aspirations for messianic times and the end of days. After the suppression of the Second Revolt, the Jews of Palestine accepted Roman rule and became reconciled to it, and this caused a renewed florescence of Judaism in Palestine, economic recovery, the reestablishment of Jewish leadership institutions, and many long years of a normal system of relations between the Roman regime and the Jewish population with its leadership. These were the foremost and outstanding results of the Second Revolt.

The failure of the revolt, which mainly injured the insurgent population and not Judaism in general, was an instructive lesson for the Jews of Palestine that Judean-Roman relations should no longer be resolved through military means.

General Selected Bibliography

In addition to books and articles that are included in the list of abbreviations, supplementary literature to the Bar Kokhba Revolt can be found in the following lists:

1. Menahem Mor, Uriel Rappaport, "A Bibliography for the Bar-Kokhba Revolt: Works and Studies published in the Years 1960–1983." In *The Bar-Kokhba Revolt—New Studies*, 243–254.
2. Menahem Mor, Uriel Rappaport, "A Bibliography for the Bar-Kokhba Revolt: Works and Studies published in the Years 1984–2000." In *New Studies on the Bar Kokhba Revolt*, 139–161.
3. In the Appendix: *Bibliography to the Bar-Kokhba Revolt (1990–2015)*.

The following list contains works related to the study of the Second Revolt which was used for the work on the book:

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Appendix: Bibliography to the Bar-Kokhba Revolt (1990–2015)

As an Appendix to the collection of articles: *The Bar Kokhba Revolt: New Research*, published in 1984, we added a Bibliographical collection which included studies written between the years 1960–1984 (See below: 1.1).

Since then the research on the Second Revolt became more intensive, following the publications of the findings from the Judean Desert, the collections of coins of the Second Revolt and the findings of hideouts complexes.

In the year 2000 after sixteen years of research, Bar Ilan University held a “state-of-the-art” conference in Hebrew, to review the innovations in the research on the Bar Kokhba War. We added to the volume a list that covered the years 1984–2000 (See below 2.2).

Researchers of the Second Revolt were looking for novelties and new directions, as well as additional interpretations for the well known ancient sources; likewise, the interest in the revolt was broadened since the discovery of new archaeological findings such as epigraphic evidence from different regions, military Diplomata, and many new sites of Hideouts complexes.

In 2001, another conference was held at Princeton University which focused on the new perspectives of the Second Revolt, and reconsidered old and new topics related to the War. The proceeding of the conference was published at 2003 (See below: II.2.15).

The Princeton conference gave new impetus to the study of the Second Revolt, and was followed by publications on a rich variety of topics which can be evaluated through the list below, and the research used in my English book.

In my Hebrew book published in 1991 (See below 2.2.4) I added an extensive bibliographical list, including studies that appeared until 1990. In the English book I decided to continue and enlarge the list to the years 1990–2015.

I added some items which were published before 1990, since they were left out from the former lists.

Below are listed the subjects I used for the bibliography:

1 Bibliographies for the Bar Kokhba Revolt

2 General Books

- 2.1 History of Eretz Israel during the Second Temple Period (General Historical Reviews)
- 2.2 The Bar Kokhba Revolt (General Reviews)

- 3 Eretz Israel Between the Revolts 70–132 CE
 - 3.1 Responses to the Destruction of the Second Temple
 - 3.2 Between the Revolts
- 4 The Immediate Causes of the Revolt
 - 4.1 The Ban on Circumcision
 - 4.2 The Building of Aelia Capitolina
 - 4.3 Messianism—The Leader of the Revolt
- 5 The Courses of the Second Revolt
- 6 Rabbi Akiba and the Sages during the Revolt
- 7 Archaeology
 - 7.1 The Findings from the Judean Desert
 - 7.1.1 Babata
 - 7.1.2 Others
 - 7.1.3.1 Hideout Caves
 - 7.1.3.2 The Refuge Caves
 - 7.1.4 Coins
 - 7.1.5 Inscriptions
- 8 The Roman Army in the Provincia Iudaea
- 9 The Results of the Revolt

1 Bibliographies for the Bar Kokhba Revolt

1. Menahem Mor, and Uriel Rappaport, “A Bibliography for the Bar Kokhba-Works and Studies published in the Years 1960–1983.” In *The Bar-Kokhba Revolt—New Studies*, 243–254.
2. Menahem Mor, Uriel Rappaport, “Bibliography for the Bar-Kokhba Revolt: Works and Studies published in the Years 1984–2000.” In *New Studies on the Bar Kokhba Revolt*, 139–161.

The lists for the years 1984–2000 on the Bar-Kokhba Revolt is part of a computerized bibliography project named: **HEROD NET** = **H**ellenistic **R**oman **D**ata.

The computerized bibliography deals with the History of the Jewish People at the Second Temple Period (538 BCE–135 CE) The bibliography is classified with a large variety of subjects.

Remarks, corrections and additions to the list are welcomed. Please send it by E-Mail to the following address:

mmor@univ.haifa.ac.il (Menahem Mor)

2 General Surveys

2.1 *The History of Eretz Israel during the Second Temple Period (General Surveys)*

1. Aberbach, Moshe, Aberbach, David. *The Roman-Jewish Wars and Hebrew Cultural Nationalism*, London: Macmilan Press, 2000.
2. Blasius, Andreas. "Jüdische Unabhängigkeitsbestrebungen von Judas Makkabäus bis Bar Kochba." In *Das Gelobte Land: Erez Israel von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart; Quellen und Darstellungen*, edited by Alexandra Pontzen, Axel Stähler, 61–88. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 2003.
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12. Schwartz, Seth, *The Ancient Jews from Alexander to Muhammad: Key Themes in Ancient History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

2.2 *The Bar Kokhba Revolt (General Reviews)*

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 3. ———. *Rom herausfordern: Bar Kochba im Kampf gegen das Imperium Romanum. Das Bild des Bar Kochba-Aufstandes im Spiegel der neuen epigraphischen Überlieferung*. Rom: Unione internazionale degli istituti di archeologia, storia e storia dell’arte, 2007.
 4. ———. “Hadrian’s Hard-Won Victory: Romans Suffer Severe Losses in Jewish War.” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 33 (2007): 42–51.
 5. ———. *Rom und Judaea*. Fünf Vorträge zur römischen Herrschaft in Palaestina, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007.
 6. ———. “Der Bar Kochba-Aufstandes der Jahre 132–136 und seine Folgen für die provinz Judaea/Syria Palaestina.” In *Judaea Socia-Judaea Capta*, atti del convegno internazionale Cividale del Friuli, 22–24 settembre 2011, edited by Gianpaolo Urso, 249–265. Pisa: ETS, 2012.
 7. ———. *Judäa—Syria Palästina*. Die Auseinandersetzung einer Provinz mit römischer Politik und Kultur. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014.
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